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HOPOGHAN HACKINGH.



WOODLAND SCENE FROM CASTLE POINT.

Hopoghan Hackingh.

HOBOKEN,

A

PLEASURE RESORT

FOR

OLD NEW YORK.

BY

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* * *

Si computes annos, exiguum tempus; si vices rerum avum putes.—PLINIUS MINOR.

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Hoboken Illustrations.

Indian Deed of Hoboken, July 12, 1630.*

The Mansion House of Colonel Stevens, which was surrounded by grounds laid out with great judgment and taste, in the best modern style, and ornamented with a profusion of shrubbery and trees, and perfumed with showers of roses and other flowers, giving the extensive fields the appearance of a succession of gardens.

The Green, near the Ferry.

On reaching the shore at Hoboken Ferry, you rise a gentle ascent to a lawn in front of a large and commodious inn. The lawn is shaded with noble elms and other wholesome trees, under which the visitor may generally find a fresh and invigorating sea-breeze, and have choice refreshments brought to his seat. Here, throwing aside all care, people of every grade in society meet to pass the afternoon when the heat of the city is oppressive.—*Disturnell* (1835).

A Wood Scene, Hoboken Walk.

The scene chosen by the artist is lovely in the extreme. The eye pierces away into the woody winding path on the right; and on the left, a beautiful and well-known glimpse of the bay and city will designate the spot as one probably vivid in the recollection. The light is shed down softly through the branches of the forest, and the foliage and trunks of the trees are very happily executed. The whole landscape, with the verdant groves and cool shades, has a rich look. The picture is from a painting by Weir, from a spot in one of the new walks near the Mansion House, painted in about 1834.

Incipient Ferris Wheel, set up in the Elysian Fields, near the Colonnade.

Part of Map of Hoboken, showing localities.

Map of the Southerly End of Hoboken, showing location of the old Ferry and the '76 House.

Elysian Fields and Colonnade—1836.

Old Print, showing the '76 House, the Ferry, with its periaguas, and the Creek dividing Jersey City and Hoboken.

Season Ticket, Hoboken Turtle Club.

Sybil's Cave.

*These two pages are a *fac simile* of the Indian Deed of Hoboken to P. Pauw. It is the first deed recorded in New Netherland.

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PREFACE.

THE following Monograph on Hoboken grew out of a Paper read before the New York Historical Society, in December, 1894. That Paper forms Part Second of this little volume. Part First of the volume consists of historical facts, necessary to a full knowledge of Hoboken in the past. I do not think that much of its early history remains to be written.

The illustrations will add largely to the interest of the subject, and will preserve many local views already past the recollection of the "oldest inhabitant."

In a foot-note I have attempted an explanation of the origin of the name. I confess that my views are not in accord with the views of historians who have expressed themselves on the subject, but I submit them to the reader and to his candid judgment.

C. H. W.

JERSEY CITY, *November 1, 1895.*

PART FIRST.

PART FIRST.

THE first reference in the annals of New Netherland to the place now called Hoboken is found in the journal of Robert Juet, the Mate of the "Half Moon." Hudson was returning from his trip up the river now bearing his name. On the second day of October, 1609, he reached the upper part of Manhattan Island. There he was attacked by the Indians. After describing this incident, Juet says: "Within a while after, we got downe two leagues beyond that place, and anchored in a Bay, cleere from all danger of them on the other side of the riuer, where we saw a good piece of ground; and hard by it there was a Cliffe, that looked of the colour of white greene, as though it were either Copper, or Siluer Myne: and I think it to be one of them, by the Trees that grow vpon it. For they are all burned, and the other places are greene as grasse."

More than twenty years passed before another reference is made to this place. Then the Director and Council of New Netherland in behalf of Michiel Pauw, Lord of Achtienhoven, purchased from the native owners the land spoken of by Juet. The following is a translation of the deed, or acknowledgement of conveyance. It is the first recorded deed in the records of New Netherland:

"We, Director and Council of New Netherland, residing on the Island of Manahatas and the Fort Amsterdam, under the authority of their High Mightinesses the Lords States-General of this United Netherlands and the Incorporated West India Company, at their Chambers at Amsterdam, do hereby witness and declare that on this day, the date hereof underwritten, before us in their proper persons appeared and showed themselves, to wit: Arommeauw, Tekwappo, and Sackwomeck, inhabitants and joint owners of the land called Hobocan Hackingh,* lying over against (opposite)

* Whence came the name Hoboken as applied to this place? With much unanimity writers have adopted the opinion of Mr. O'Callaghan in his History of New Netherland: "Hoboken is so called after a village of the same name, situate on the Scheldt, a few miles south of Antwerp." The statement does not bear on its face any indication of doubt of its correctness. Yet I venture to affirm that if he or any one who adopts his opinion, should be asked for his authority, or to give a reason for his assertion, he would face a difficult task. I admit that the present spelling of the name on the Hudson lends plausibility to the

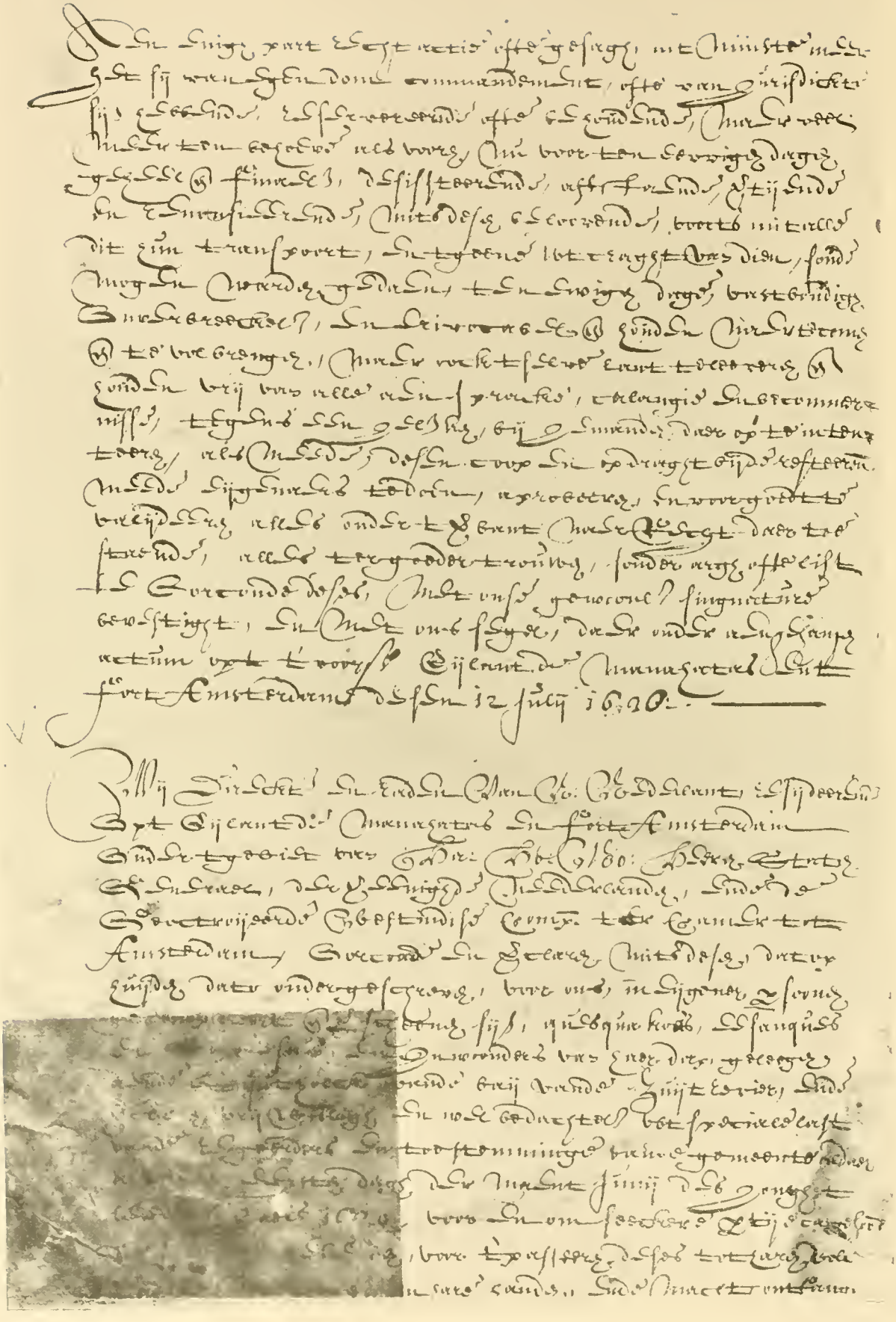
the aforesaid Island Manahatas, who both for themselves and, *rato cavern*, for the remaining joint owners of the same land, declared that for and in consideration of a certain quantity of merchandize, which they acknowledged to have received into their own hands, power and possession, before the passing of these presents in a right, true, and free ownership, have sold, transported, ceded, conveyed, and made over, and by these presents they do transport, cede, and convey to and for the behoof of Mr. Michiel Pauw, absent, and for whom we, *ex-officio*, accept under suitable stipulations, viz.: the aforesaid lands by us named Hobocan Hackingh, extending on the south side, Ahasimus; eastward, the River Mauritius, and on the west side surrounded by a valley (marsh) and morass, through which the boundaries of said land can be seen with sufficient clearness and be distinguished; and that, with all the jurisdiction, right, and equity, to them, the grantors, in their quality aforesaid, belonging: Constituting and putting in their place and stead the already mentioned Mr. Pauw, in the real and actual possession thereof, and at the same time giving full and irrevocable power, authority and special command to the said Mr. Pauw peaceably to enjoy, occupy, cultivate, have and hold the aforesaid land *tanquam actor et procurator in rem suam aeproprium;* and also to do with and dispose of the same as he might do with his own lands to which he has a good and lawful title; without their, the grantors, in their quality aforesaid, saving or reserving any part, right, action, or authority thereto in the least, either of ownership or jurisdiction; but altogether to the

claim of its origin. This, probably, would be the best, if not the only reason that could be given for its alleged relationship to the village on the Scheldt.

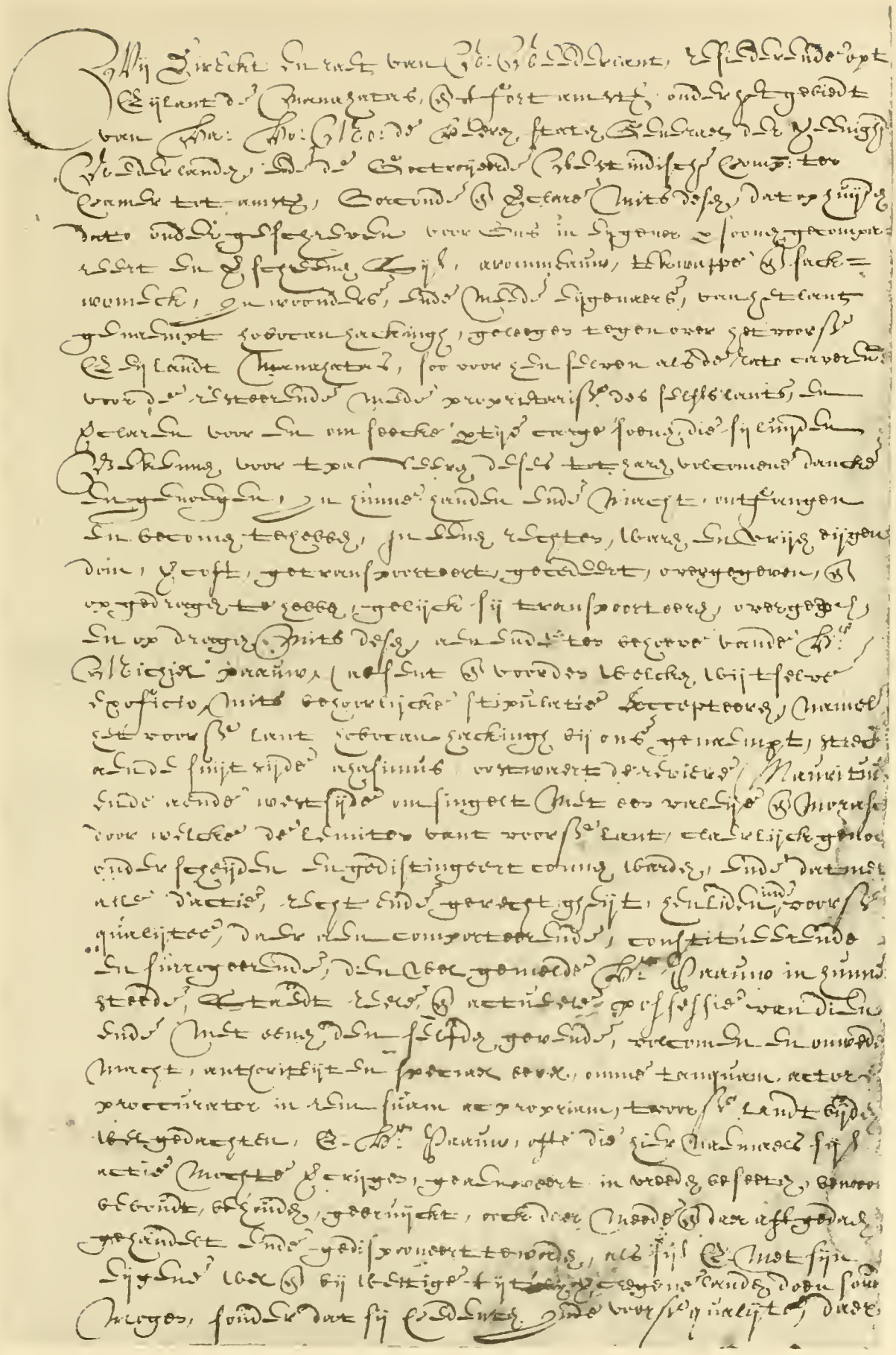
1. Why should the place have been named after such an insignificant village? Why not honor it with the name of some town of more prominence as was done in "Amsterdam" on Manhattan, and "Flushing" on Long Island. It does not appear that any of the men acting for Mr. Pauw in this purchase claimed that village as his birth place or former residence, nor that Pauw was interested in it. Certainly the surroundings and features of the two places were not so alike that the name of the one naturally suggested a name for the other. In fact, there was no resemblance. That was a plain sandy level, this an island—hilly and rolling; that was reclaimed from the sea and protected from inundation by dykes, this was glacial drift deposited on the outcropping rock, and in some places nearly one hundred feet above high water.

2. If it was the intention to name this place in honor of the village on the Scheldt, why was not that intention carried out? It must be presumed that the Director and Council of New Netherland were men of at least fair education. They must have known something of the geography of their own country. The village of Hoboken so near to Antwerp, at that time one of the most flourishing towns in the country, could not have been unknown to them, insignificant though it was. Yet, in this deed for an important tract of land, where the conveyance was made as much by the name of the land as by boundaries, and therefore accuracy of expression is to be looked for, the name is written as no Dutchmen, before or since, ever wrote the name of the village on the Scheldt. All contemporaneous writings (and I think for a hundred and fifty years afterward) in this country and in Europe, show that one name was spelled differently from the other. Even the Directors and States-General spelled the word as they had received it from the New Netherland, seemingly without a suspicion that it was the name of their own village. This certainly seems incredible. It can be accounted for only on the supposition that they regarded the names of the two places as entirely different.

3. The deed was drawn and put into its present shape by the authorities of New Netherland. In the part descriptive of the grantors they are said to be "inhabitants and joint owners of the land called Hobocan Hackingh." It was *the land*, (Hackingh) not a settlement that had the name by which the Indians were supposed to know it and by which they were conveying it. It would appear from this expression that this was a well-known name of the place. But when the framers of the deed came to write a description of the land granted, a doubt seems to have entered their minds, if they had correctly named it in the early part of the deed. A fair construction of the phrase "inhabitants and joint owners of the land called Hobocan Hackingh" is that the grantors knew the land by that name. Therefore, in the granting part of the deed the phrase was modified by saying "the land was *by us named* Hobocan Hacking." This I regard as a confession that the writers of the deed were doing the best they



INDIAN DEED OF HOBOKEN, JULY 12, 1630.



INDIAN DEED OF HOBOKEN, JULY 12, 1630.

behoof as aforesaid, henceforth, forever, wholly and finally desisting, renouncing, and quit-claiming; promising hereby, moreover, not only to keep, maintain, and fulfill this, their grant, and whatever shall be done by virtue thereof, inviolable and irrevocable forever, but also to keep and maintain the same land against all persons free from any claim, challenge, or incumbrance to be made thereon by any person; as also to cause this sale and grant to be approved of and held valid by the remaining joint owners as they are by right obligated to do; all in good faith without fraud or deceit.

In witness whereof these presents are confirmed with our usual signature and with our seal thereto affixed.

Done at the aforesaid Island of Manahatas, in Fort Amsterdam, this 12th July, 1630."

Subsequently, Pauw secured title to Ahasimus, Aresick and Staten Island. Under the freedoms and exemptions such ownership entitled him to the dignity and authority of a Patroon, or feudal chief of the territory. Latinizing his name and bestowing it upon his colony, it was thenceforth known as Pavonia.

This colony was regarded as of vast prospective importance. It controlled the

could with a name in a language new and difficult to them. But they were not confident that they had understood the word correctly. To them it sounded like Hobocan Hackingh, and, therefore, they hesitatingly said "by us called Hobocan Hackingh."

4. When did Hoboken on the Scheldt become burdened with an Indian suffix? When and where, before or since, was it so written? The suffix, "Hackingh" is said to mean *the land of*, or *the place of*. When it is added to Hobocan (if by that name Hoboken on the Sheldt is meant) what is the meaning of the compound word? Will it be said "the land of Hoboken?" Is there any sense in that? Sewanhacky is said to mean "the land of the Sewan," or the place where that money was made. So "Hobocan Hackingh" must mean *the land of* something which had existed on *that spot*, not on the Scheldt, and by which the place was then known. The Indians had never heard of the Scheldt or its village. If the word "Hobocan" is Dutch, and was intended for "Hoboken," that is easily understood. It is only an instance of different spelling. But why add to it a word which had never belonged to it and which only confuses. If they had said "Antwerp Hackingh," the name would have contained as much sense as the name "Hobocan Hackingh." "Hackingh" is admittedly an Indian word, and if "Hobocan" is Dutch, the two when united form a hybrid, half Dutch and half Indian; reminding one of the Minotaur of Euripides.

"A mingled form prodigious to behold,
Half-bull, half-man."

5. Many places in this vicinity had Indian names: as Pembrepogh, Minkakwa, Kewan, Apopealyk, Gemoenepaen, Araseek, Ahasimus, Sikakes and Awiehaken. It would have been a singular and striking omission, if so prominent and beautiful a body of land as Hoboken had been left nameless. It is true that many of these names are sadly deformed in their transition from one language to the other. But when a name, pronounced in the native gutterals, had been filtered through a Dutchman's ear, and licked into shape by a Dutchman's tongue, very close resemblance to the original was not in all cases to be found or expected. In many instances its recognition was beyond the skill of the philologist.

Hopoghan was the name which had been given to the place by the natives. They knew it by that name and were conveying it by that name. It is easily seen how "Hobocan" was made out of "Hopoghan." The only way the Dutchmen could get at the name was by the sound. The natives pronounced it and the strangers wrote it phonetically. Add to the word "Hopoghan" the suffix "Hackingh," and the conclusion is irresistible that the compound is exactly the word which the Dutchman wrote "Hobocan Hackingh." "Hopoghan" is said to mean *tobacco pipe*, made from the soap stone found at Castle Point. It is also frequently used in a symbolic sense to express crookedness, and may have been here so used in reference to the shore of the river. The notion of writers that the name comes from the village on the Scheldt is wholly erroneous. It is Indian and nothing else: "Hopoghan Hackingh" *the land of the tobacco pipe*, or symbolically, *the land of crookedness.*

shore opposite Manhattan Island, and dominated the native commerce from the south and west. The Dutch West India Company from the beginning had designed to make New Amsterdam the emporium of their trade, and to that end required that all fruits and wares "that arise on the North River and lands lying thereabouts" should be first brought there. Whatever antagonized that design was regarded with disfavor by the company. It was not long, therefore, before the Patroon of Pavonia found himself in a heated controversy with the other directors. This threatened the prosperity of the company. But peace was restored in 1634 or 1635 (for the transfer is without date), by the Patroon's release to the company of his interest in Pavonia for 26,000 florins. The company having secured this important tract, and desiring to make known to all subsequent settlers that private ownership should not thereafter attach to land in Pavonia opposite New Amsterdam, gave general notice that it reserved unto itself "the land of Achassemes, Arasick and Hobokina."

The first white occupant of Hoboken was Hendrick, son of Cornelis Van Vorst, the Patroon's Commissary. How or when he first obtained possession is not known. It was probably through his father's influence, and it could not have been earlier than the latter part of the year 1636. Nor is it known by what tenure he was in possession. But on March 12th, 1639, he received from Director Kieft a lease of the place for twenty years from January 1st, 1640. In this lease, the place is said to have "been until now occupied by him." The meaning of this is that he was not only the first, but up to this time the only occupant of the place. He agreed to give as rent "every year the fourth part of the crop with which God may bless the land, either in sheaves upon the field or as may be deemed most advantageous, and twelve capons every year." At the expiration of the lease, the land was to be surrendered unsown. He also agreed to erect on the bouwery a barn and all other necessary buildings at his own expense, the company delivering to him 4,000 bricks to build a chimney. It is not probable that Van Vorst made any of these contemplated improvements, for, in the summer of 1639, he returned to Holland and there died.

On February 15th, 1640, Director-General Kieft, in the name of the company, leased the place to Aert Tennissen Van Putten for twelve years from January 1st, 1641. The Director agreed to erect a small house on the place, and Van Putten agreed to yield as rent "the fourth sheaf with which God Almighty shall favor the field." There is no doubt that the house which the company built under this agree-

ment was the first building in Hoboken. Van Vorst was unmarried and probably lived at his father's, in Ahasimus.

Van Putten, without delay, began to improve his leasehold. He cleared the land, fenced the fields and erected a brew-house. Thus he became the first brewer in the State, and Hoboken the place where beer was naturalized to Jerseymen. He stocked his farm with twenty-eight head of large cattle, besides various small stock, such as swine, goats, sheep, etc. He also set out many fruit trees.

On the breaking out of the war in 1643, Van Putten was away from home on a trading expedition, and was killed near Sandy Hook. His live stock was destroyed, his dwelling house, barns and stacks of grain were burnt. The only one of all his improvements remaining was the brewery.

It was not long after Van Putten's death that Sybout Claesen, a carpenter in New Amsterdam, married his widow, and then in her name claimed a right to the possession of Hoboken. In his petition he set forth that the brew-house (which was still standing in 1649) was built with her own means, and of right belonged to her. Director Kieft ignored this claim and leased the island to Dierck Claessen. This lessee afterwards abandoned the place, so that at the end of the year 1649 it lay unoccupied.

When the war of 1655 broke out the Indians, driven from New Amsterdam, crossed to Hoboken, where, "in the twinkling of an eye," a house was in flames, and all Pavonia was soon on fire. Again the desolation of this part of the country was complete. It was abandoned by every settler.

At what time Nicholas Verleth (Varlet) became interested in the place is not known, but in March, 1656, he sold the frame of a house at Hoboken to Michael Jansen, and requested the aid of the government in getting it across the river. But owing to the unsettled state of affairs, and to the fact that the Indians claimed the frame, the request was refused. On October 14th, 1656, Varleth married Anna, the sister of Gov. Stuyvesant and widow of Samuel Bayard. From that time his career was conspicuous. On Feb. 5, 1663, he received from Governor Stuyvesant a grant of 138 morgens of land, which represented Hoboken. This was confirmed to him by Governor Carteret, May 12, 1668, by the following bounds: "Beginning at the Mouth of the Creek that Parts Hobocken from Wiehaken (being the Place of Beginning also of Wiehaken Patent), and from thence running up said Creek as it runs to a stake at

the Foot of the Hill (which stake stands North fifty-two Degrees and a Half West Eighteen Chains and sixty-three Links from the Mouth of said Creek. Then from the said stake Westerly along the foot of the Hill One Hundred and thirteen Chains and a half on a straight line to a stake by a Creek which Parts Hobocken from the Meadows lying North of Horsimus (from which stake the said Creek runs about twelve Chains on a course South Sixty-six Degrees and a Half East). Then down said Creek as it runs to Hudson's River, then up along Hudson's River as it runs to the Place of Beginning."

Varleth died seized in 1675. From his heirs, Samuel Bayard, his step-son, derived title. William Bayard, one of the latter's descendants, was the owner and in possession of the place when the Revolutionary War broke out. He was a man of wealth and refined taste. He had taken much pride in improving the Island. In 1760 there was on it a garden of five acres filled with a choice collection of English fruit, such as peaches, pears, plums, cherries, nectarines and apricots; a large dwelling house, and another adjoining under the same roof used as a farm-house, with convenient cellars and an "extraordinary kitchen;" out houses, a new smoke house, fowl house, a large stable, with stalls for ten horses on a side, over which was a granary and hay loft, which would hold twenty loads of hay. Upon the farm were thirty milch cows and thirty young cattle, twenty fat hogs, six fat cattle and a pair of oxen. Besides an old orchard capable of producing eighty barrels of cider a year, there were about one thousand young trees, all grafted with the best fruit.

In April, 1771, Mr. Bayard, then residing at Castle Point, was desirous of renting the place, and his description of it shows that its attractiveness had not depreciated: "The pleasant situated and convenient House, Out-Houses, Stables, Farm and Grounds at Hoebuck, lately established into a Ferry, opposite the City of New York, on the west side of the Jersey Shore, and kept by Cornelius Hearing. The place has every convenience suitable for the purpose of a Ferry, and the entertainment of travellers in the best manner, such as one of the best of wharfes, with three pair of stairs, for every wind that blows; ground for pasture, mowing ground that will in a good season produce at least forty loads of clover hay. A garden spot scarcely to be equalled, and filled with the greatest plenty of the best of fruits; the liberty of cutting as much salt hay as is wanted for all the custom of the place; and a

better fishing place for catching shad, etc., there is not on the North River, with plenty of oysters in the creek and before the door."

In the midst of these elegant comforts Mr. Bayard spent his summers, and entertained with splendid hospitality.* On his estate the patriarchal institution of slavery was well established, and lent a glamour to the dignity of its wealthy owner.†

During the War of the Revolution, in the absence of its owner, Hoboken, with its fine buildings, extensive orchards and beautiful gardens, was a sore temptation to the marauders of both sides. On July 28th, 1778, a party of Light Horse of the Patriots visited Hoebuck and carried off a great number of cattle. On July 25th, 1779, General Pattison warned Lieut-Col. Van Buskirk that large parties of his regiment frequently went to Hoebuck, and there made great depredations on the house of Mr. William Bayard, as well as on his garden and other lands. On Saturday, August 20th, 1780, the "rebels" burnt Colonel William Bayard's new house and barn at Castile, on the north end of Hoebuck, and destroyed all the forage and timber to be found there to a very large amount. So far as now appears, this act of incendiarism left on Hoboken only a small brick house built by Mr. Bayard in 1772. It stood on the hill near the ferry. Afterwards it was enlarged by the addition of a frame building, and became the rear part of the tavern known as the "'76 House."

After the City of New York had fallen into the hands of the enemy, and the patriot army had been driven back toward the Delaware, Mr. Bayard, who at first was active in the cause of the Colonies, withdrew his assistance, and, on May 1, 1777, joined the Army of the King. For this act his property in New Jersey was confiscated to the State, and advertised by the Commissioner of Forfeited Estates to

* In 1773, Mr. Quincy, of Massachusetts, in journeying from the South dined with Col. William Bayard at his seat on the North River. In 1775, the delegates from the same State to the Continental Congress were his guests at Castle Point.

† "New York, June 14, 1771.

"Run away from William Bayard's farm, Hoobock, opposite the City of New York, a mulatto servant man, named Charles, about 40 years of age, 5 feet 7 or 8 inches high, much pock broken, his head nearly gray, wears a cap sometimes; speaks good English, rather thin, understands all kinds of family business, is a good coachman and gardner, and tends well on a gentleman; has carried a number of clothes with him, so that he cannot well be described as to what he wears; passes, it is said, for a gentleman, and has a forged pass with him. All masters of vessels are forbid to carry him off; and all taverns and other houses from entertaining him. Whoever will secure the said fellow in the nearest gaol where he is taken up, and give the earliest intelligence to his master, shall have ten dollars reward, and all reasonable charges paid by— WILLIAM BAYARD."

be sold.* It was purchased by Colonel John. Stevens, of New York, March 16, 1784, for £18,360. This, however, included much land, beside the Island of Hoboken.

Twenty years before this sale the Paulus Hook Ferry had been erected in con-

* When the fact became known that this property was to be forced upon the market, the Baron Steuben set his heart upon its acquisition. To this end he endeavored to secure the influence of Governor Livingston. The following correspondence on the subject will be found interesting. The original is in The New York Historical Society.

STEUBEN TO LIVINGSTON.

"OCTOBER, 1783.

"SIR:—I take the liberty of offering through your Excellency a request to the honorable, the Legislature of the State of New Jersey, which if your Excellency should not think improper, I hope will meet your support.

"There is a house and farm at Hoebuck which was the property of a Mr. Bayard, but at present I am informed belongs to the State. If this house and farm is to be sold I should be happy in having the right of pre-emption.

"As I have not yet a home in the United States, nor have seen a place which pleases me more than the one above mentioned, I shall be much indebted to your Excellency's goodness should the Honorable Assembly think fit to grant me my request."

LIVINGSTON TO STEUBEN.

"TRENTON, 7th Nov., 1783.

"SIR:—I was not honored with your Letter of the 20th of October till three days ago, since which I have been so particularly occupied in business as not to have had it in my power to send you a line in answer.

"Respecting this State's giving you the pre-emption of the house & farm at Hoebuck, late the property of Mr. Bayard, but since confiscated & vested in the State, give me leave to assure you, Sir, that I scarcely know a Gentleman on the whole Continent whom our Assembly would take a greater pleasure in obliging than Baron Steuben; but Commissioners being appointed by act of Legislation in every County to sell in the respective Counties the forfeited lands at public auction to the highest bidder, the Assembly cannot, without a new Law repealing the powers vested in the Commissioners for that particular County, respecting that particular farm, give any directions to the contrary; and your own Good Sense will dictate to you the difficulty of obtaining such repeal in favor of any Individual, from the Precedent that would thereby be established for the claims of other applicants who might, though without foundation, conceive themselves equally meritorious, & consequently equally entitled to the like indulgence by legislative interposition. You know, Sir, the nature of our democratical Governments. You know the jealousy of Republicans. Your only way, therefore, if you still retain your fancy for purchasing the farm in question, is to employ some agent (if the farm is not already sold, which I really cannot at present ascertain) to make the purchase for you, limiting him as to the sum that he is not to exceed.

"But if you never was on the spot yourself in the months of July, August or September, & I thought myself at liberty to obtrude my advice upon you, I would say that considering how often you are exposed to the loss of blood in the way of your profession as a Soldier, I would dissuade you from putting it in the power of the Musquitoes at Hoebuck to augment the effusion, for never did I set my foot on a place where that troublesome and venemous little volatile, during those months, swarmed in greater abundance."

On the receipt of this letter the old soldier showed some signs of irritation. It is manifest that his feelings had been wounded. It must be admitted that the Governor's letter bore traces of trifling with one whose magnificent services to this country in her hour of need were worthy of recognition.

On November 17th, 1783, he replied as follows:

"SIR:—When I took the liberty to address your Excellency my Request to the Legislature of the State of New Jersey, I mentioned the farm and house at Hoebuck, knowing no more about it as that this Place by Confiscation belonged to the State. A man who has no house to live in is not very particular in his choice. This, Sir, is really my Case. Several States have made me Grants of Lands in the most generous manner. And neither the Democratical Principles, nor the jealousie of Republicans, have been an obstacle to honor me, with a particular mark of Affection.

"In the State of New Jersey I wished for a dwelling house, not as a Grant, but only to buy it by a Pre-emption, which I would have considered as a particular mark of favor conferred on me by the State of New Jersey. But as the apprehension of jealousie or other Claim for a similar Prerogative stands in my Way, I withdraw willingly my application."

nection with the new route of travel to Philadelphia, and the South and West. And ten years before this sale the Hoboken Ferry was established. Notwithstanding these facts the westerly shore of the Hudson was not improved, nor had it attracted settlers. But gradually the conviction that this shore had a future forced its way into the minds of enterprising men. In 1804 this conviction developed into a movement to improve the land lying between Bergen Hill and the river, opposite the City of New York. Paulus Hook was purchased by some enterprising men of New York and laid out into a city. Another wealthy merchant of New York bought the Dutch West India Company's farm, and laid that out into a city. Colonel Stevens immediately followed in the wake of these movements. He mapped out a part of his land and launched the enterprise under the name of "The New City of Hoboken." The lots were put on the market with quite a flourish of trumpets.* Notwithstanding

* The following is a copy of advertisement made by Colonel Stevens:

"To be sold at public auction, at the Tontine Coffee-House, in the City of New York, at 12 o'clock, on Monday the 9th day of April next; at Hoboken, on Tuesday, the 10th day of April; at the Tontine Coffee-House, on Wednesday, the 11th day of April, and at Hoboken, on Tuesday, the 12th day of April.

"About 800 lots of ground at Hoboken, on Hudson's River in the township and county of Bergen, New Jersey, and nearly opposite to the City of New York.

"As many persons are desirous of obtaining situations, where they may transact business free from the danger of yellow fever, the restrictions of quarantine, the duty on auctions, and the heavy taxes of incorporated cities; the subscriber offers for sale the most advantageously situated part of his estate at Hoboken, laid out in the form of a town, and sub-divided into small lots for the convenience of purchasers. The town-plot will extend along the Turn Pike Road towards Hackensack about half a mile, forming a street thereon of one hundred feet in breadth. Streets of 80 feet wide will run parallel to the turn-pike on each side thereof. On the east side, at the distance of 220 feet from each other, with an alley of 20 feet intervening, so that the lots on this side will be 100 feet deep. On the west side the streets will be at the distance of 330 feet from each other, with an alley or street of 30 feet intervening, so as to form lots on this side of 150 feet deep. Cross streets, 50 feet wide, will run at right angles to the main streets, at the distance of 3 or 400 feet from each other. And nearly in the centre of the town-plot, a square or oblong, of at least 800 feet long by 400 feet wide, will be reserved for public uses. The water lots will, for the most part, have a margin of 80 or 100 feet above the bank of the river, and will extend into the river about 400 feet to the channel. The lots will be 25 feet wide in front and in rear.

"Hoboken is situated on Hudson's River, nearly opposite to the City of New York. From the ferry-stairs at Hoboken to DeCline's, near the State Prison, is one mile, which is the shortest distance across the North River, anywhere in the vicinity of this city. It is the point of commencement of the Bergen and Orange turn-pike, and the point of termination of the land journies of persons coming to this city from places in a northerly and westerly direction, on the west side of the river. Public stage carriages arrive at and leave Hoboken every day in the year, Sundays excepted. The situation of Hoboken is healthy, the soil is dry sand and gravel, and the water excellent.

"The harbor of Hoboken is as easy of access for vessels from the sea as the harbor of New York, and more convenient for vessels navigating Hudson's River. In the course of the ensuing summer, wharves will be erected, which will be more secure from high winds and ice, than those on the opposite side of the river; and ware-houses will be built, where ships of any burthen may deposit and dispose of their cargoes. Vessels clearing out from the port of Hoboken, during the prevalence of yellow fever in this city, will avoid the inconveniences and expenses incident to quarantines in foreign ports.

"The terms of payment for the lots will be as follows, viz: One-tenth part of the purchase money of each lot to be paid within

the effort put forth, not many of them were sold. The result did not meet Colonel Stevens' expectations. He, therefore, issued a circular notice that he would continue the sale in May. In this notice was a rehearsal of what the House of Assembly had given leave to be presented at its next session, and what would be done.*

ten days after the day of sale, and the remainder of the money in four equal annual payments with interest; on the receipt of the first annual payment, a deed will be given, and a mortgage taken to secure the remaining payments; those who build a dwelling house on a lot within one year from the day of sale, shall have credit for three lots for four years, without interest. A like credit will be given to those who erect wharves and store-houses on water lots.

"The subscriber reserves the right of ferriage, but the owners of water lots may keep boats for crossing for themselves and families to and from New York, but not for the use of other persons.

"It is proposed that the purchasers of lots shall meet at the Tontine Coffee-House, New York, on Saturday the 14th of April, at 12 o'clock, in order to give names to the several streets, each person to be entitled to as many votes as he has lots in the street to be named.

"A map or plan of the intended town, in which the streets and lots are all laid down, on a large scale, from actual measurement may be seen at the office of Mr. David Dixon, auctioneer. Copies on a small scale will be published in a few days.

"The subscriber will loan $20,000 in small sums, for five years at legal interest, to purchasers with small capitals, who are desirous of making spirited improvements on their respective lots. "JOHN STEVENS.

"New York, March 22, 1804."

* HOBOKEN.—The honorable the House of Assembly of the State of New Jersey having given leave that a bill should be presented to them on the first Monday of the next meeting of the legislature, declaring "That whenever it shall be duly certi-"fied to the governor or commander-in-chief of the State, that the sum of fifty thousand dollars has been actually expended in "making wharves, buildings and other improvements at Hoboken aforesaid, and that twenty families have removed to and "become inhabitants of the said place, and that the sum of five hundred thousand dollars has been subscribed by citizens of the "United States, for the purpose of making other wharves, buildings and improvements, and for erecting a bank, an insurance "office, and other useful departments at the said place, that then and in such case, the governor or commander-in-chief of the "State, shall by letters patent under his hand and the great seal of the State, create and erect the subscribers aforesaid into a "body politic and corporate, in deed and in law, by the name, State and title of the president and directors of the Hoboken Com-"pany, and by such name to have perpetual succession, and all privileges and franchises incident to a corporation, and to be "capable of taking and holding their capital stock, both real and personal, and the profits thereof; and of enlarging such capital "stock by new purchases to them and their successors and assigns, in fee simple, or for less estate, or by new subscriptions, "in such manner and form as by them may be prescribed, if such enlargement shall from time to time be deemed expedient; and "to be capable of selling and disposing of any part of their real or personal estate at their pleasure, and of dividing from time to "time all or any part of the profits or increase of the capital stock, and of suing and being sued, and of making regulations rela-"tive to the election of officers, and generally of doing all and every other act, matter and thing, which a corporation or body "politic may lawfully do."

Now therefore, notice is hereby given, that a bill for the purposes aforesaid, will be presented to the honorable the House of Assembly of the State of New Jersey, on Monday, the 29th day of October next. That by the said bill the number of shares in the said company will consist of ten thousand of fifty dollars each, and that the owners of lots at Hoboken will be entitled to subscribe if they shall think proper, but not otherwise, to ten shares in the company, for each lot they shall have purchased, and that such owners shall severally have the privilege of assigning, in the whole or in part, such right to subscribe, in case they do not choose to become members of the company themselves.

Dated at Hoboken, the 5th day of May, 1804. JOHN STEVENS.

N. B.—Mr. John Anderson, of Newburgh, has contracted to carry out a wharf or bulkhead, extending from Front Street to Third Street about one thousand feet. Piers will be run from First, Second and Third Streets which will extend between two and

The continuation sale was not very successful. In the course of time Colonel Stevens turned his attention to the beautifying of the place, and making it attractive to visitors. But his efforts in this line only assured him that the features which rendered the place so attractive were evanescent. To perpetuate its charms, he developed a scheme by which he hoped to make them permanent. It is not probable that his views on this subject were ever communicated to the public. But recognizing the philosophy that a thing of beauty is a joy forever, he matured a plan for placing the shore front of his lands in an ownership where they must forever remain public property, devoted to the use of the City of New York as a pleasure resort for its people. He saw that art must step forward to tame the wildness and develop the natural beauty of the island. This would cost more money than one man could ordinarily afford to put into the venture. He opened and partially improved a walk along the river, which afterwards became such a favorite promenade with the people. This work demonstrated at once the necessity of improvements, the great expense they would entail, and what a Mecca for the people of New York the place might become. No attempt was ever made to carry out his scheme. Perhaps it was impracticable, but it shows the genious and foresight of the man, and leaves one to fancy what an Eden of beauty and pleasure must have been the Hoboken of his vision. The paper must have been written about the year 1824. It is here inserted for preservation and for public information. He says:

"It is unnecessary to go into details respecting the immense advantages the City of New York would derive from an improvement of the margin of the North River

three hundred feet into the river, forming basins perfectly secure from storms and ice, and at the end of which the water will be eighteen feet deep at low water.

Mr. Anderson has engaged to complete his contract before the first of December next. Two or three hundred feet of the wharf, and one of the piers, will probably be finished before the first of August next, so that storehouses may be built and vessels may be able to discharge their cargoes, before the first of September next.

The sale of lots at Hoboken will be continued at public auction on the premises on Tuesday, the 22d May instant, when there will be offered for sale:

Twenty-five lots on Water Street, fronting Anderson's wharf,
Twenty-five lots on Hudson's Street,
Fifty lots on Washington Street,
Fifty lots on Bloomfield Street,
Forty lots on Garden Street,
Thirty-two lots on Meadow Street.
Also, an excellent situation for shipyards, and several good positions for those who wish to be near the banks at Greenwich.

immediately opposite the city. The Island of Hoboken extends upwards of a mile from the present ferry to its northern extremity. A walk for the whole length has already been opened and partially improved. But to do this great work requires a capital far beyond the ability of its present owner. He, therefore, would suggest the following proposal:

"That for a reasonable consideration he will convey in fee simple to the Corporation of the City of New York, so much of the margin along the shore of said river as may be necessary, thus securing to said corporation a perpetuity in whatever improvements this body politic may be disposed to make, with this express condition, however, that said premises, or any part thereof, shall at no time hereafter be disposed of, either in fee simple or on a lease for any period of time whatever, but be forever continued in the immediate possession, tenure and occupation of said corporation, together with the present ferry, and such other ferries as it may hereafter be deemed necessary and proper to erect and establish, anywhere between the site of the present ferry and the northern extremity of what is called Weehawken.

"As a mere matter of pecuniary speculation, the advantages derivable from such a purchase on the part of the corporation would be incalculable. But immense as they may be, they would be small indeed when we take into consideration the vast importance of such an acquisition as a place of general resort for citizens, as well as strangers, for health and recreation. So easily accessible, and where in a few minutes the dust, noise and bad smells of the city may be exchanged for the pure air, delightful shades and completely rural scenery, through walks extending along the margin of the majestic Hudson to an extent of more than a mile. The beauties of which may at a small expense be made to surpass everything of the kind to be found anywhere.

"The corporation now owns the ferries from the city to Hoboken. It will unquestionably prove highly advantageous in every point of view that the exclusive right on the Hoboken side should be also vested in this corporate body. In such case no exclusion can be made of the future increase of revenue derivable therefrom. The ferries to and from Brooklyn yield at present an immense income, which is rapidly increasing as the population of the city and adjacent country increases. And as the existence of the Corporation of the City of New York remains *in perpetuo*, what, we may ask, would be the probable amount of revenue derivable from this source some 50 or 100 years hence?

"Viewing the subject in all its various aspects, it would seem almost impossible for the corporation to pay too much for a site so every way unique, and which in the nature of things must forever continue unrivaled.

"In a more pecuniary point of view the consideration now asked ought not to be considered of the least moment. When we contemplate the benefits derivable from the possession of the margin on the west side of the Hudson for an extent of more than a mile, enveloped in a thick shady grove of trees, the rapid growth, vigor and beauty of which would, of course, become an object of pride and exultation to every citizen. When these circumstances are taken into view, we are led to conclude that so desirable an acquisition ought to be secured at any price.

"But to obviate all objections arising from the present inability of the corporation to advance the capital requisite for effecting the purchase and making the requisite improvements, two gentlemen of undoubted credit,* to their immortal honor, now offer to step forward and make such arrangements as will completely relieve the corporation from all difficulties that might arise on that score. And the present proprietor will superintend gratis all operations necessary for carrying the contemplated improvements into effect as speedily as possible.

"For affording every accommodation and refreshment, and also adequate protection against sudden showers of rain, a number of pavilions should be erected at suitable distances and in eligible sites. These should be kept under the immediate control of the corporation, and the occupants restricted from selling any kind of intoxicating liquors.

"In the erection of the pavilions every effort should be resorted to, to render them the most finished specimens of architectural beauty and elegance. And for the attainment of this object, emulation should be excited by conferring adequate premiums on such of the plans offered as shall be most approved of by competent judges. And let not this be condemned as an unnecessary piece of extravagance. Perhaps nothing could have a more powerful tendency to civilize the general mass of society, to polish and refine the manners of all classes as the mixed intercourse necessarily taking place in such promiscuous assemblages of the rich and poor, in situations where nature and art are made to contribute so largely to the embellishment of every scene

* John Jacob Astor and Dr. David Hosack.

presented to their view. The presence, too, of the most respectable members of the community would operate powerfully in restraining the vicious propensities of the licentious, and would give a tone of sobriety and decency to the general manners of society. And as aiding and powerfully promoting such beneficial effects, the Board of Aldermen would have frequent occasion of holding meetings in some one of these pavilions.

"Some twenty years ago, large sums were expended in building wharves, etc.,* for the accommodation of shipping, and for converting Hoboken into a seaport town. But though this project *then* failed, it no doubt might hereafter be carried into effect by which the improvement now proposed would be frustrated and defeated. To prevent any possibility of encroachments and interference of a like nature, the property should be immediately invested in the corporation.

"Various causes have combined to make New York a place of fashionable resort, a sort of headquarters during the summer season for persons in pursuit of health and pleasure from every other quarter of the globe, from which they can take their departure in every direction with unexampled facility and expedition. The improvements now suggested would give, however, many additional attractions to this already very highly favored city."

The township of Hoboken was set off from the township of North Bergen March 1, 1849. It was incorporated March 28, 1855, in the name of "The Mayor and Council of the City of Hoboken." The acceptance of the Charter was left to the people. The vote thereon was taken on the 29th of the same month, and stood: "Charter," 337; "no charter," 185. Population in 1895, 54,083.

* These wharves were erected in the summer of 1804. *Vide Foot Note 6.* This fixes the date when the above paper was written.

PART SECOND.

PART SECOND.



URING almost the whole of the first half of this century Hoboken was a delightful resort for the dwellers of the city. There the toil-worn found rest, and the weary invigoration in the sea-tempered air. There the lover of nature in her simple and quiet forms found a retreat in the deep shade of the woods, and he who was satisfied with fictitious entertainments beguiled his leisure hours with cheap sports or in listening to the amazing stories of the mountebank.

Like its big neighbor on the east side of the river, Hoboken was an island. When and from what part of the "up country" it came we do not know. How it came geologists pretend to tell. They do not magnify its importance by claiming that the glacier, which ploughed its irresistible way down the valley of the Hudson, was formed solely to build up that Island. But they do say that in its impereeptible march to the sea, with a basic pressure of sixty tons to the square foot, it denuded ridges and disintegrated rocks, and bore along to lower levels the result of its contact. When it reached water of sufficient depth, mountains of ice were broken from the glacier and icebergs laden with mud, gravel and boulders were floated. These, in moving with the winds, or currents, grounded on projecting rocks. One of these projections was a serpentine outcrop at Hoboken. On it some of these icebergs deposited their hoardings. Thus in course of time "Hopoghan Hackingh" reared its crown above the surrounding waters.

The westerly side of the island was in some places half a mile from the New Jersey shore. The intervening water was of considerable depth. This was gradually lessened by deposits from the river. Over these deposits the salt grass wove and matted a covering decorated with "willow weeds and mallow." The only remnant of this body of water which separated the island from the mainland, when the Hollanders first saw it, was a small tide creek which wound around at the foot of the hill

from Weehawken to the northerly bounds of Ahasimus.* On the easterly side the shore was bold, backed by upland in some places nearly one hundred feet in height. Near the northerly end was a promontory, now known as Castle Point. From its summit opened a view of uncommon grandeur. Out of the north came the lordly Hudson sweeping with majestic flow along the foot of the towering Palisades; on the east lay Manhattan, crowned with its primeval forest, and on the south Hamel's Hooftden rose out of the mist at the inner gateway to the ocean.

The surface of the island varied into plain, hill and dell, all covered with a dense growth of magnificent trees. The gentle waves of the river rippled along its shores, and the heat of summer was moderated by the refreshing breeze that came up from the ocean. The English language has been exhausted to describe its beauty and attractiveness.

When Colonel Stevens found that the lots in his "New City" were not taken up with avidity, he gradually turned his attention to the possibility of making his island home so attractive that the residents of New York would flock to it as a place of rest and recreation from the weary city. If this could be brought about, it would insure revenue to his ferry, purchasers for his lots, and settlers for his city. Of course, it would take time, much labor, and great expenditure of money to perfect such an undertaking. Nature had done much to guarantee his success. There was the island unequaled in situation, unsurpassed in beauty; but the people who were to pay tribute to its owner and absorb his acres lived on the opposite side of the river. They must not only be taken across, but taken in a safe, comfortable and expeditious way. The great obstacle to be overcome was the sad lack of ferry accommodations. Navigation at that time was not much advanced from what it was when "Jehoshaphat made ships." The ferry equipment consisted of two periaguas and two row boats. The periagua was a sort of two-masted canal boat with lee boards. This was brought into requisition when there was wind enough to make the voyage to Manhattan a probable success. When there was a calm the periagua was useless. Then the row boat was brought out and propelled by a "white ash breeze."

But if the boats were so sadly lacking in accommodations for passengers, what shall be said of the crews to which their management was entrusted? For a long time

* Nearly all trace of this creek is obliterated by filling in streets and constructing railroads.

the crew of one of these periaguas comprised a negro and a dog. It is said that old Sime had great respect for the intelligence of that dog. He insisted that it knew more than a Bergen County Dutchman, for when there was a wind the dog went straight to the periagua, and when there was a calm it went to the row boat, showing that it knew which boat was adapted to the weather, and there wasn't a Dutchman in Bergen County who knew enough for that.

The ferry house on the New Jersey side consisted of three frame shanties, one for a waiting-room, one for a bar-room, and one for a warehouse, in which the farmers deposited their produce to wait for a favorable opportunity to take it to market. There was no scheduled time of departure from either side of the river, nor was a bell rung to notify people who were desirous of crossing. On the New York side a negro with cheeks distended and eyes like stars starting from their spheres sounded a tremendous horn, invariably ending the blast with a loud call of "Hoboken away." Then the farmers with bundles and baskets hurried aboard. When they should reach the west side of the river was a problem depending largely on the wind and tide for solution.

With such ferry facilities a man was excusable if he lived in New York for half a century without knowing that Hoboken existed, or that it could boast of any other distinction than that of being the place whence came eggs, poultry and vegetables for his table. It could not be expected that either nature or art, or both combined, would be able to persuade the lover of either to desert the Battery as a pleasure resort, and brave the inconveniences and uncertainties attending a voyage to Hoboken. Such crude ferry accommodations meant isolation from New York, and isolation from New York meant depreciation in the value of property on the west side of the river.

But the mechanical and inventive genius of the proprietor could not rest contented in the midst of such adverse surroundings. Plans for a better and more expeditious method of crossing the river were maturing in his mind. He was abreast of the men of his time who were then busy in making a practical application of steam as a power in navigation.* As early as 1798 he had been jointly interested with Living-

* In its notice of the "Aerial Ways" then on exhibition in Hoboken, one of the New York papers said: "The inventor is Colonel John Stevens, of Hoboken, who is one of the most persevering and successful machinists of our country, and whose name will be identified with one of the most important benefits ever conferred upon the internal commerce of the United States. We mean the introduction of steam navigation."

In his work on the "Steam Engine," Prof. Renwick says: "John Stevens, of Hoboken, commenced his experiments on steam navigation in 1791. Possessed of a patrimonial fortune, and well versed in science, he was at the time wanting in the prac-

ston and Roosevelt in placing a steamboat on the Passaic River. He now constructed a boat for use on his ferry to be propelled by the newly applied power. In September, 1811, the "*Juliana*," the first steam ferryboat in the world, made her trial trip on the Hudson River. It was put into service on the Vesey Street ferry, and on the 23d of that month made sixteen trips, with a probable average of one hundred passengers each trip.

This boat was run but a short time, and then laid up for the winter. She resumed her place April 12, 1812, and continued that season and part of the next. Then certain acts of the Legislature of the State of New York, conferring on Livingston and Fulton exclusive privileges in the navigable waters of that State, were invoked against it. One of these acts provided that if any person without a license from them should presume to navigate the waters of the State by boats or vessels propelled by the force of fire or steam, his boat, its engine, tackle and apparel should be subject to forfeiture to the grantees of the monopoly. They were authorized to seize the boat in the same manner as if it had been tortiously taken from them, and the courts were enjoined to render them all assistance. At that time the State of New York claimed exclusive jurisdiction over the waters of the Hudson, and ownership of the land covered by those waters. Intending to banish from the North River the use of steam unless by their permission, and especially to cripple Colonel Stevens, Livingston and Fulton gave to the Powles Hook Ferry Company an exclusive right to use steam ferry boats from any point on the New Jersey shore for a distance of three miles north of that ferry. This included Hoboken and Weehawken, and, to the extent of its validity, dealt a heavy blow at the existence of those ferries. In the face of the claim to these exclusive rights, and the penalties following encroachment upon them, Colonel Stevens was forced to retire his ferry boat to prevent its seizure and confiscation. The "*Juliana*" was then laid up and went to decay.

Gloom and disappointment settled on Hoboken. Its very life depended on the success of its ferries. For nearly two years steam as a propelling power had been used on one of them. In this time the ferry had become profitable, the new city

tical mechanical skill that was necessary to success; he was hence compelled, at first, to employ men of far less talent than himself, but who had been educated as practical machinists. His first engineer turned out an incorrigible sot; his second became consumptive, and died before the experiment was completed. Stevens then resolved to depend upon his own resources, and built a workshop on his own estate, where he employed workmen under his own superintendence. In this shop he brought up his son, Robert L. Stevens, as a practical engineer, to whom many important improvements in steam navigation and the most perfect boats that have hitherto been constructed, are due. During these experiments, Stevens invented the first tubular boiler."

made a forward movement, and the people of the City of New York resorted to it in great numbers. But the hand had slipped back on its dial. Monopoly in its most repulsive form was crushing out its life. Again it was forced to resort to the periagua and row boat. How to break away from them, with the legislation of New York preventing the use of steam boats except by the grace of her grantees, was a question not yet capable of solution. But Colonel Stevens, though defeated, was not disheartened. With a determination which would not recognize defeat, he screwed his "courage to the sticking place," and in a few months evolved a contrivance which he thought would checkmate the steam boat monopolists.

On March 12, 1814, he announced to the municipal authorities of the City of New York the completion of his new invention: "The Memorial of John Stevens; showeth, That your Memorialist hath constructed a boat to be propelled by horses or mules, which he contemplates to run on the ferry from the foot of Vesey Street to Hoboken, and which he trusts will prove a complete substitute for a steam boat; that he is at present engaged in building another, which he expects will be ready to run in three months from this time; that these boats promise to be of incalculable value to the intercourse between this city and the Jersey shore, particularly in facilitating the transportation of marketing to the Washington Market. But in order to render this improvement of public utility, conveniences for the landing of horses, carriages and marketing are indispensably necessary. Your Memorialist, therefore, prays that your Honorable Body would be pleased to cause such accommodation to be constructed for the aforesaid purposes as may appear necessary and proper."

This he claimed was the first team ferry boat that ever plied on the Hudson River. It "had a circular platform in the center, with cleats to give the horses foothold, and the shaft of the paddlewheel was made to revolve by means of cranks on a small wheel on either side of the shaft, geared to a large wheel on an upright spindle, like a crab or cider mill, with two or four arms extending over the platform, and to these arms two, four or eight horses or mules were hitched. At first they were single-enders, and had to turn in crossing the river; but later, double-enders were used, capable of running bow on."*

* *Evolution of the Ferry Boat by S. B. Dod, Harper's Weekly, Jan. 5, 1889.* It is incorrect to say that in this evolution the ferry boat passed from the periagua to a team boat and then to the steam boat. The evolution is correctly stated in the text. The team boat was a backward step forced upon Colonel Stevens by the legislation of New York.

The authorities did not act upon his memorial with the promptness which he thought its merits deserved, and, therefore, on the 28th of the same month he again addressed them. After reminding them of his new boat built on an extensive scale and improved plans, he asked for better landing accommodations on the New York side. He offered to bear the expense of these improvements on condition of an extension of his lease for five years, if the boats should be found, after adequate experiments, to answer the purposes intended. This proposition was accepted: "Resolved, That the Board do agree to the proposition contained in the foregoing letter from Mr. Stevens to the Chairman of the Ferry Committee, and whenever the said Committee shall be satisfied that the proposed horse boats are calculated to answer the intended purposes, that they report accordingly to this Board; whereupon the Mayor is hereby authorized and directed to modify and extend the term of Mr. Stevens' lease in such manner as above stated in his letter."

On December 3, 1814, Colonel Stevens informed the Committee on Ferries that the horse boat had been plying through the season and had completely "answered the purposes intended as well as a steam boat." He announced his determination to put on another horse boat the ensuing season, superior to the one then running.

On May 15, 1815, he wrote: "The horse boat is now in complete operation, and I could wish the Committee and such of the members of the Board as can conveniently attend, would appoint a time, when the horse boat will be ready to take them over to Hoboken, that they might be able to form from actual observation a just estimate of the improvement resulting from that mode of conveyance."

The invitation was accepted. The trip proved a success, and the Colonel's team boat had apparently come to stay. He fondly hoped that the day had dawned when the foreigner from Manhattan would bring his obolus to the Hoboken ferryman and be borne over the river to cool shades, commodious seats, and thirst-quenching refreshments. But, alas! how circumscribed is the horizon of human foresight. On an evil day in January, 1817, he entered into an agreement with the brothers John, Robert and Samuel Swartwout to lease to them for the term of ten years from May 1, 1817, the Hoboken ferries. They promised that on the date their lease went into

effect they would place on the Vesey Street ferry* "two good horse boats of not less than eight horses to a boat," and on the Spring Street ferry "as many sail or ferry boats as the corporation" might deem proper. But in about a year these lessees became financially embarrassed, and in 1818 judgments were entered against them. The boats and horses were seized and sold by the sheriff, and bought in by the brother-in-law, Philip Hone. On May 1, 1818, the City of New York gave him a lease for twelve years, and permission to "substitute a good substantial team boat in the place of a steam boat." Hone started in the enterprise without duly considering the rights of others, and, as Colonel Stevens always insisted, in disregard of the covenants in the lease to the Swartwouts which had been assigned to him when he purchased their interest in the ferries.

In June, 1818, Hone made the following announcement: "The Corporation of the City of New York having granted to the subscriber a lease of the Hoboken Ferry, he has associated with him in that establishment Mr. Philip De Peyster, who will have the sole charge of conducting the same. All applications, therefore, respecting the ferry will be made to him. Two horse boats are now in complete operation, with good accommodations for passengers and carriages, etc. One of them will in future start from each side of the river punctually at every hour from five o'clock in the morning until eight o'clock in the evening."

It will be observed from this that communication with Hoboken ceased at eight o'clock. No evening entertainments could be indulged in by New Yorkers with reasonable expectation of getting back home the same night. Hone's management became a source of great annoyance to Colonel Stevens. The latter owned "a public house at Hoboken, chiefly supported by the custom of the ferry, and the resort thereto from the city as a place of entertainment." Hone not only prevented the Colonel's public house from entertaining in the evening, but against all precedent and good order kept in his said ferry boats a "bar" for the sale of such refreshments as were fur-

* The landing place was changed in May, 1817, from Vesey Street, because it was "too much crowded with carts," to Murray Street; but as Murray Street was "too remote from the market to accommodate the country people," the landing place was changed June 8, 1818, to Barclay Street, where it has since remained. The following is of interest:

"To Hoboken:—A steam boat sails from the bottom of Murray Street every half hour from sunrise to sunset; fare, one shilling; carriages from one dollar to one dollar and fifty cents.

"A sail boat for the same place starts from the bottom of Spring Street; fare 12½ cents.

"To Weehawk. An open or sail boat goes from the bottom of Murray Street twice a day with passengers; fare, nine cents."

—*Blunt's Stranger's Guide to New York (1817) 223.*

nished at the Colonel's "'76 House."* Worse than all these, Hone kept his horses and mules at work fifteen hours without rest or intermission, while on the short ferries to Brooklyn they were changed two or three times a day. This crippled the ferry, caused a tedious, uncomfortable and uncertain passage over the river, discouraged visitors, diminished the Colonel's revenue, and depreciated his property. But why should Hone whip up his overworked and hungry mules when the thirsty passengers were "cabined, cribbed, confined" on his boat, and must patronize "the bar" on board, or endure thirst unassuaged? The longer the voyage, the more money in his purse. The Colonel thought of the ease and rapidity of conveyance to Staten and Long Islands by means of Fulton's steam boats; he saw the multitudes flocking to the resorts there provided, and then turned with disgust to the mules tramping their circular treadmill in a lazy, indifferent effort to get the boat to Hoboken, and its passengers to the refreshments awaiting them at his "public house." His wrath was kindled against Hone. He saw his great invention in the hands of others, and as he thought (perhaps justly) working irreparable injury to his hotel and other property.

That part of the public, however, which was inclined to look upon the humorous side of things, poked fun at his boat and the method of its propulsion. One of the visitors to Hoboken has left a record of his trip across the river. He says, "We embarked on an aquatic conveyance, called by the people of these parts a *horse boat*. But I am inclined to think that this novelty is a mere sham, a trick upon travellers. There are a dozen sorry nags in this contrivance, which go round in a circular walk, with halters on one end and beams at the other extremity. How this orbicular movement can promote the rectilinear advancement of this mammoth boat is to me a mystery. And as we were six hours in crossing the river, I suspect that they go and come with the tide; and that the horses are a mere catchpenny, to bring their masters the trigesimo-secundal part of a dollar more on every head than the customary ferriage levied on passengers. However, the unhappy quadrupeds appeared to strain very severely, and in their hinder quarters very particularly; indeed, every sinew of the latter part seemed to be over-exerted, while the neck, head and forelegs moved glibly enough, which is certainly a natural curiosity. I account for it in

* Colonel Stevens and his lessees did not hesitate to continue the practice here condemned as late as 1830. "There are small stores in the boats for selling liquor, fruit, confectionery, etc., places of about 8 feet by 6 in size. The storekeepers pay $200 a year in each boat for the privilege of selling these articles." *Stuart's North America; p. 327.*



THE '76 HOUSE AND FERRY—NEW YORK IN THE DISTANCE.

this way: as the horses are all in a string, and the hinder parts of each one immediately subjected to the inspection of his follower, these noble animals draw up their anteriors from pride, and contract their posteriors from decency." . . .

Notwithstanding the condition to which Hone had reduced the ferry he held on to it, much to the annoyance and disgust of Colonel Stevens. Because of the inconveniences attending the crossing, the people of the city were not attracted to his beautiful island in the Hudson; its shady groves were not frequented; its city, begun with so much confidence in 1804, remained unbuilt. The Colonel was convinced that this state of affairs would not change for the better so long as the ferry was thus managed. He tried to compromise his differences with Mr. Hone. He offered to continue the lease to him without further controversy if he would close the "bar" on the boats and give up the lease he had obtained from the City of New York.*

This was refused, and preparations were made for a battle royal. Under advice of Richard Stockton, as his counsel, Colonel Stevens "on Tuesday, August 29, 1820, between four and five P. M.," went on the ferry wharf at Hoboken, and there in the presence of Lucas Van Boskerck and John Lee, informed John Van Boskerck, the ferrymaster, that he did then make entry to defeat the estate granted by the lease on account of the breaches of the covenants, and he then and there demanded the immediate surrender of the possession of the ferry house, wharf and appurtenances. All these demands were refused, as he expected they would be. The suit begun with so much formality was never pushed to judgment.

The Colonel went so far in his efforts to get rid of Hone's management that he began preparations to erect an opposition ferry for the purpose of crushing him. In May, 1821, however, all controversies were settled by compromise. His sons, John C. and Robert L. Stevens, bought the interest of Hone, and the ferry was surrendered to them. Then they leased it from their father for a term of fifteen years. He then memorialized the Legislature of New York for relief from the odious monopoly granted to Livingston and Fulton, for it had rested, and was then resting very heavily upon him. He had learned from experience that horses and mules were a weak substitute for steam, and when put into competition with it were a sad

* Mr. Hone's second lease from the city was for fifteen years, dated May 1, 1820.

failure.* But the day when this grant would be repudiated and the Legislature defied was near at hand. The right of that State to exclusive navigation on waters dividing two States was being discussed by lawyers. It had been taken into the courts, and was nearing its final adjudication. The more it was examined, the more untenable seemed the claim. Its supporters were few, its opponents were many.

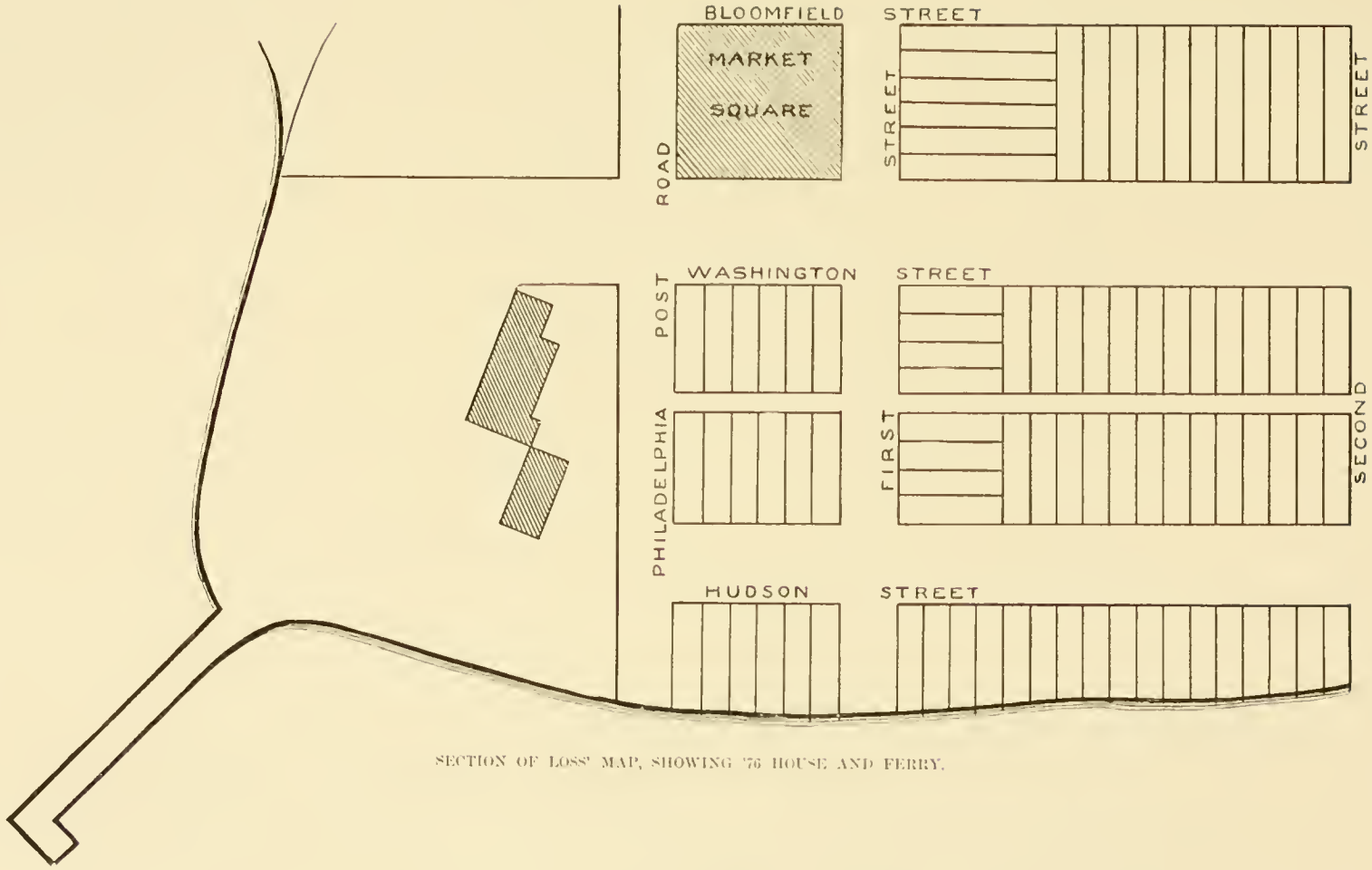
The new lessees obtained from the City of New York a lease for the ferries for fourteen years on the condition that on or before the first day of May, 1822, they should place on the Vesey Street Ferry a steam boat, the speed of which should be such as to make an equal number of trips per diem with the two team boats then plying. This requirement was directly antagonistic to the acts of the Legislature. To meet it the Messrs. Stevens immediately began the construction of a steam boat of "very superior accommodations," which was confidently expected to surpass every other ferry boat on the river, and capable of making more trips than the team boats, in less than half the time.

The Legislature of the State of New York did nothing to modify their grant to Livingston and Fulton, or to aid Colonel Stevens to restore steam to his ferry. Failing to get relief from that source, he turned upon their licensees, and informed the proprietors of the Powles Hook Ferry that it was the purpose of the proprietor and lessees of the Hoboken Ferry to place thereon one or more steam boats. To this information he added the following offer and defiance: "Provided, we are left undisturbed in running steam boats on the Hoboken Ferry, we are ready and willing to stipulate (now) that steam boats of similar construction shall be placed on the Powles Hook Ferry. By such arrangement the two ferries will be placed nearly in the same relative position they now are, and a saving of nearly one-half the present expense will be effected. We would wish you to give us a speedy and definitive answer to the above proposition. It is, however, to be distinctly understood that whether the above proposition is or is not acceded to, we are fully determined to run steam boats on the ferry to and from Hoboken to New York."

With this bold defiance to the monopolists and their licensees, to the Legislature

* His prayer was "that such permission may, by a law of this State, be made as will secure to him and to his lessees the quiet and peaceable occupation and enjoyment of such rights as appertain to him as proprietor of said Hoboken Ferry on the New Jersey side, and to them as lessees of said ferry as well on the New York side as on the New Jersey side."

He insisted that the grant to Livingston and Fulton was nugatory, but for peace sake was willing to make them a reasonable compensation "for their grant of a right to run steam boats on the said Hoboken Ferry."



SECTION OF LOSS' MAP, SHOWING '76 HOUSE AND FERRY.

of New York and its unjust enactments, the controversy, so far as Colonel Stevens was concerned, ended. The "Hoboken Steamboat Ferry Company," incorporated November 3, 1821, placed on the ferry the steamboats *Hoboken* in 1822, and the *Pioneer* in 1823.*

The new boats immediately became popular with the public. They were comfortable and comparatively elegant. The ladies' cabin was below deck, carpeted and warmed by open fire places.† Hoboken also immediately felt the pulsations of a new life. From the noise and hurry of the City of New York, people in great multitudes were attracted to it and its sylvan solitude. The place was close at hand, easily and comfortably reached, and presented allurements unsurpassed.

> "For Nature here
> Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will
> Her virgin fancies pouring forth more sweet,
> Wild above rule or art."

Its prosperous days as a pleasure resort were between 1820 and 1850. Most of its beauties and attractive features have long since surrendered to the iconoclastic march of improvements. Yet it will not be a waste of time to recall some of them. Thus we may have the secret of its power to allure from year to year such vast multitudes from the City of New York.

In front of the "'76 House" was a beautiful lawn known as "The Green," bounded on the west by Washington Street, on the north by First Street, and on the east by the river. Ascending the sloping bank, and entering "The Green," one was immediately introduced to a spot which for years had been the delight and boast of the people who dared to brave the inconveniences of crossing. Commodious seats

* On the Spring Street ferry the horse boat remained until July 4, 1825.

† The proprietors of the ferry were liberal in labor and expense to give the best accommodation to the public. In the spring of 1828 they advertised, "The public is respectfully informed that there are four Steam Boats per hour, on the Hoboken Ferry—three to Barclay and one to Canal Streets. A Boat will leave Barclay Street and Hoboken regularly every twenty minutes, commencing (by St. Paul's Clock,) at the even hour. The *Fairy Queen* will leave Canal Street at the commencement of each hour, and Hoboken at the intervening half hour. The proprietors have four first-rate Steam Boats, viz., *Hoboken*, *Newark*, *Pioneer* and *Fairy Queen*, employed at this ferry, and will endeavor to carry this present arrangement into effect with the punctuality and certainty travellers by this route have heretofore been accustomed to. The cabins of these boats are handsomely fitted up."

under the refreshing shade of wide spreading elms, the deep verdure of the surrounding gardens, and the beautiful winding, graveled walks were well calculated to charm the weary citizen in his moments of relaxation. Amusements and refreshments in endless variety were at the call of the visitor.

The walk, which had already been opened, Colonel Stevens completed into a deeply shaded promenade, winding gracefully in among the overspreading foliage, leading by the river from the ferry around Castle Point to the dense woods on the north, then known as Turtle Grove; not from the doves whose low music charmed its shade, but from the green turtle served up to the substantial citizens of New



HOBOKEN TURTLE CLUB TICKET.

York, who in former times selected this pleasant and retired spot for their dinners. The memory of those festal days is perpetuated in "The Hoboken Turtle Club" of the City of New York.* This walk must have been completed in the early part of 1826, for in that year De Roos, in his "Narrative of Travels in America," said: "A

* I have not been successful in fixing the date of the organization of this club. But it was a well known institution in the first quarter of this century. The name "Turtle Grove" had been affixed to a part of what was afterwards known as Elysian Fields. It was spoken of as "the old resort of the Turtle Club." I am inclined to the belief that Hoboken became a resort for the turtle eating gastronomes about the beginning of this century.

beautiful walk extending for two or three miles along the Hudson is kept in the finest order, and commands a noble view of the city on the opposite shore. American aldermen have the same predilection for turtle which is supposed to characterize our own; and the groves of Hoboken annually witness a vast consumption of green fat at the celebration of their civic festivities."

Another in 1828 said: "Following the walk that leads north to Colonel Stevens' seat for about half a mile, we arrived at one of the finest country seats and one of the noblest views presented by any spot on the margin of the Hudson River in its whole extent. The view from this delightful spot is indescribably fine, and embraces all the finest features and effects of landscape scenery that can be imagined, and from its projection towards the river and the boldness of its site and elevation, it has a most commanding view up and down the river and of the City of New York."*

Hoboken was now attracting prodigious numbers of visitors—on some days not less than 20,000—but did not seem to win many permanent residents. Either the enterprising owner was devoting most of his time to developing the place as a pleasure resort, or else did not offer inducements sufficient to convert the visitors into residents.

In 1829 an account of stock showed: One post office, four hotels, four groceries, three smitheries, one wheelwright, two carpenter shops, one livery stable, one distillery, one steel manufactory, three schools, and between four and five hundred inhabitants. *No* lawyer, *no* physician, *no* minister, *no* justice of the peace! Happy Hoboken! In the high noon of its golden age! How the hearts of its people must have swelled with gratitude for their absence, and with what earnestness they must have prayed that the day might be far distant when there should be a necessity for either.†

* In *Stuart's North America*, I. p. 327, it is said, "Colonel Stevens and part of his family reside in a beautiful villa, about half a mile from Hoboken, situated upon a plateau of fine level ground overhanging the river. They have laid out their property adjoining the river, for about two miles, in public walks, which the inhabitants of New York, who come over in prodigious numbers, enjoy very much. In this way the value of the ferry is increased, as well as the rent of the hotel belonging to Colonel Stevens at Hoboken, which is at present (Dec., 1829) rented for $2,000 a year. The walks are shaded with beautiful willow trees and other ornamental wood."

In *Picturesque Beauties of Hudson River*, it is said, "North of the lawn is a gravelled walk, shaded by thick woods, which is a most delightful promenade. No expense has been spared to make this pathway one of exquisite taste, and full of romantic variety. It is lovely and grateful in the morning, at noontide, and at dew fall."

† Compare this statement with one made in the *History and Gazeteer of New Jersey* in 1834: "Hoboken, built chiefly on one street, and contains about 100 dwellings, 3 licensed taverns, many unlicensed houses of entertainment, 4 or 5 stores, and several livery stables and gardens, and between 6 and 7 hundred inhabitants."

Vide foot note 5 and it will be seen why the town was built chiefly on one street. It is there said: "The town plot will extend along the turnpike road towards Hackensack."

In 1830, Turtle Grove, which had been visited so often by the dinner-loving aldermen and other gastronomes of New York, where many a young couple had been wounded by the arrows of winged Eros, (what time the westwind and the rainbow carpeted the island with flowers), was improved by winding walks and paths through which crowds of people rambled in the grateful summer shade, or, when weary, rested upon benches or the green sward.

"Yellow fields of asphodel
And amaranthine bowers."

The breeze coming in from the ocean, laden with health to the worn toiler of the city, made music through the leaves, and the birds chirped and twittered among the branches, making the place resonant with melody—paralleled only by the fabled island of ocean where the sirens sat in meadows blooming with flowers, while their voices stilled the winds. There could be no other name for this charming spot than Elysian Fields, for did it not remind one of the *Elysii Campi* of old, blessed with perpetual spring, clothed with continued verdure, enamelled with unfading flowers, shaded by pleasant groves, and refreshed by never failing fountains; where the righteous lived in perfect felicity, communing with each other, bathed in a flood of light proceeding from their own sun, and the sky at eve lighted up by their own constellations; the home to which the mortal relatives of the king of the gods were transported, without tasting of death, to enjoy an immortality of bliss.

To entertain and protect from showers the throngs who came to these fields, Colonel Stevens, in 1830, erected a pavilion, generally called the "Colonade." It was opened for business in the spring of 1831. It was of Grecian architecture, devoted largely to the worship of Bachus. Thither old New Yorkers were accustomed to wend their way to drink in the beauty of the scene and their favorite beverage, and to join in the *Io Bacche! Euoi! Iacche!* Speaking of these fields and the woods extending down towards the ferry, a writer of the time says: "He (Colonel Stevens) has restricted his pleasure grounds to a few beautiful acres, laying out the remainder simply and tastefully as a public park. It is hardly possible to imagine one of greater attraction; a broad belt of light underwood and flowering shrubs, studded at intervals with lofty forest trees, runs for two miles along a cliff which overhangs the matchless Hudson; sometimes it feathers the rocks down to the very margin, and at



THE COLONNADE IN ELYSIAN FIELDS.

others leaves the pebbly shore just rude enough to break the gentle waves and make a music which mimics softly the loud chorus of ocean. Through this beautiful little wood a broad well-gravelled terrace is led by every point which can exhibit the scenery to advantage; narrower and wider paths diverge at intervals, some into deeper shadow of the woods, and some shelving gradually to the pretty coves below."

To add to the many attractions of the walk along the river, in 1836 an excavation was made in the rock at Castle Point, where a spring had long existed. Thenceforth the water issued from the excavation, and thirsty promenaders drank it at one cent a glass. To this excavation was given the name "Sibyl's Cave."*

The old "'76 House," kept in 1825 by Van Buskirk, in 1831 by Van Antwerp, and afterward by Tom Swift, was the first stopping-place for the visitor. Here he obtained his first view of the delectable grounds. In summer the spacious lawn in front was thronged with hundreds seeking rest, pleasure, health and enjoyment. The portly New Yorker who had gone perspiring over the heated pavement in the morning, here lounged upon a commodious seat, sipped refreshments, and grew gradually cool with the declining day. Here groups of children romped in unrestrained freedom, and young people now and then whirled in the mazy dance on the velvet lawn. The honest tradesman sat and breathed the sea-tempered air; the lawyer lost the chance of a fee to escape from his musty books to this breezy eminence; the orator left his discourse unfinished to muse on an appropriate conclusion; the editor flung down his pen in a passion, answered his devil's remonstrances with uncivil ejaculations, and hastened thither to puff out cigar smoke and settle paragraphs, inhale milk-punch and ideas in the same delicious moment. The actor who last night stalked before his audience as *Richard* or *Othello*, left his coat and his conscience in the theatre, and lounged here in a state of luxurious inanimation. Indeed, there were periods during the sultry season when all classes might here find a happy representative; where the belle and the beau, the rich and the poor, the

* Gordon in his history says: "Hoboken is remarkable chiefly as a place of resort for the citizens of New York during the hot days of summer; the bank of the river is high, and the invigorating sea breeze may be enjoyed at almost all hours when the sun is above the horizon. The liberality of Mr. Stevens has opened many attractions to visitors, in the walks along the river bank over his grounds; and in the beautiful fields studded with clumps of trees, and variegated by shady woods, the business New Yorker finds a momentary relaxation and enjoyment in the Elysian Fields, and the gastronomes find a less rural, though not a more sensual pleasure in the feast at Turtle Grove. The value of the groves of Hoboken to the inhabitants of New York is inappreciated and inappreciable. They are the source of health to thousands."

worker and the drone, the merry and the discontented, met upon a common level of enjoyment.* Lucretius has left a description of a like scene of Saturnalian enjoyment: "These pleasures charmed and delighted them when the feast was over; for then all things please. Then reclining on the soft sward by a purling stream under the umbrageous boughs of some tall tree, they often enjoyed themselves at small cost when the season smiled and spring strewed the verdant earth with flowers. Then were there merry jests and banter, and peals of laughter; then the rustic muse held sway; then roguish merriment led them to adorn their heads and shoulders with garlands and flowers and leaves, and dance in unrestrained measure, moving their limbs awkwardly, and shaking their mother earth with heavy feet; while joyous cries and happy laughter arose, because all these novel and wonderful pranks flourished."

Art had done much to subdue and beautify the wilderness of the place. But this was not all. The proprietor being a man of wealth, enterprise and mechanical genius, did not hesitate to devote his time and great abilities to add one attraction to another to draw visitors from the city. In front of the "'76 House," and generally surrounding "The Green," as early as the fall of 1825, Colonel Stevens constructed a circular railway and placed thereon a locomotive. The wheels, now known as driving wheels, were like ordinary wagon wheels—twelve wooden spokes and a wooden felloe bound with an iron band. There was no flange to the wheels, but they were kept on the rails by vertical spindles with wooden rollers pressing laterally against the inside of the rails. It was then known that the adhesion of the tire, forming the periphery of the wheels of the carriage containing the machinery of the steam engine, to the iron rails was sufficient to drag after the steam carriage a train three times the weight of the steam carriage with its machinery, on horizontal rails. Should it be necessary to pass over an elevation, some other means must be resorted to. To meet this necessity,

* In the *Interpeiad* of June 15, 1831, a writer says: "Hoboken appears to be a place of universal resort this sultry weather. And well it may be, for there is not such another refuge from the monster care within the precincts of our goodly city. Subject matter for a volume of speculation might be found in the countenances you meet there; but our mind is usually taken up with more comfortable reflections than that of human countenances when we get there. The excellent soda water and mead, to say nothing of the lemonade, port punch, or spruce beer of 'mine host,' together with the freshness of the afternoon breeze, are subjects which drive all meaner ideas from the mind.

"Far up the Hudson, at what is called Turtle Grove, there is an airy and tasteful establishment, appropriately named the 'Colonnade,' and kept by Mr. H. H. Dyer. We do not name this establishment by way of disparagement to any other, but merely because it is new, and suits our taste to a nicety. It will be thronged every sultry afternoon through the summer, if it is kept up in the spirit of its commencement."



ON THE GREEN IN FRONT OF THE '76 HOUSE.

Colonel Stevens' engine gave motion to a cogwheel placed in the center between the wheels of the steam-engine carriage, the cogs of which worked in the cogs of a rack on a third rail placed equidistant between the other rails. It was the first locomotive in America driven by steam upon a track, of which there is any reliable record. When it was removed from the circular railway a track was laid on the river-walk around by Castle Point to the Elysian Fields, on which the engine was to be put into use. There is a doubt if it was ever completed, though it was not far from it.*

After the removal of the locomotive the circular railway was converted into a double track, with a gauge of two feet six inches instead of five feet, as it was when the locomotive was in use. Two light carriages were used, one on each track, and they usually went around in opposite directions. Two persons could sit side by side, each working a crank handle, or one could use both hands. The crank axle carried a pulley connected by a leather belt to a pulley on the main axle, on which were placed light wheels about three feet in diameter. These carriages were kept on the track by the same device as was used on the locomotive. The two carriages were frequently engaged in a race, the inner one being handicapped. When each was propelled by two strong men, the rate of speed was fully a mile in three minutes. A visitor to Hoboken said, concerning the railway: "The only object worth note that we saw was a circular railway for the exercise of the youth of both sexes. It is pleasantly situated under a clump of tall forest trees, several hundred yards in extent. There was a couple of carriages on it, driven with the hand. Here you might observe a gay young gallant handing to seat some timid blushing miss, and gently folding in the stray portions of her airy drapery, while he plants himself by her side, and away they wheel, round and round, till the arm is tired, or the fair one gently whispers 'enough.' They now descend and retire beneath the surrounding foliage, to whisper (all very sweet, no doubt) of bright days to come; while their envied seat is again wheeling, in rapid revolutions, another fond and fluttering pair."

But another and more important contrivance, one which seemed to foreshadow the

* *Writings of R. C. Sands*, 2d Vol., p. 287 (1835): "A superb promenade along the margin of the river under the high banks and magnesia rocks which overlook it, on which it is intended to lay rails."

Commercial Advertiser, July 12, 1831: "The railroad now nearly completed from Hoboken Landing to the Elysian Fields."

In *History and Gazeteer of New Jersey* it is said Bergen County has two railroads, "exclusive of that made by Mr. Stephens, along the North River."

gravitation, if not the elevated railroad,* was set up by Colonel Stevens for the admiration and use of the public. There can be no doubt that his attention was first directed to what he afterwards called "Round Iron Ways," by his son Richard, who, in 1825, was studying medicine in Paris. Richard collected all the information obtainable concerning the "Montagnes Russes," of which there was one set up at the Beaujon, and one at the Tivoli. The information was gathered for the purpose of setting up one of these "Mountains," or what would now be called "Tobogganns," at Hoboken, for the entertainment of visitors. In a letter to his brother John C., dated April 23, 1825, he says: "The best place at Hoboken, no doubt, would be on our hill.† The next best place, perhaps, at the school-house.‡ Wherever it is erected, there ought to be an establishment for refreshments of all kinds. If Pa would consent to renting our house,§ you might for the first year have a sort of Vauxhall Garden, for which you might fix a price for entry. I don't know how these Montagnes would take with our folks. They are great favorites here. * * * *

It seems to me that the place you fix on for this establishment should be such

* The following suggestions of Colonel Stevens show that, as early as 1830, he held pretty clear views of elevated railroads through the city and across the Hudson.

1. "By elevating columns on each side of the street, placed just inside the curb stones to the height of ten or twelve feet, a set of rails can be laid so as not to interfere with a carriage of any description passing through the same, and where streets are to be crossed the carriage with its load will pass under said rails. The subscriber will undertake to construct the rails with the columns and other fixtures for said distance for the sum of $340,000, one half payable in stock at ten per cent. above par. The route of the railways is to be carried through lots below Church Street on a line as straight as practicable from the Battery to Harlem River.

2. "Two railways, commencing at the fence forming the line of division between the Battery and —— Street, should there be elevated about ten or twelve feet above the pavement, so as to admit carriages of every description to pass freely through said street under said rails. The railways are then to be carried on each side of Washington Street or Greenwich Street, supported on pillars of stone, iron or wood, placed near the curb stones, extending to some point above the building lately occupied as the State Prison; and rising gradually from a horizontal plane at the rate of twenty-five or thirty feet per mile, so as to be elevated at their respective terminations somewhere between sixty and seventy feet above said horizontal plane. Thence to proceed at right angles, or at an angle nearly approaching thereto, to the commencement of a bridge across the Hudson River, still rising at the same angle until said bridge shall reach the shore at Hoboken, so that the elevation will be somewhere between thirty and one hundred feet above the level of high-water mark. The railways are then to proceed in a direct line over Bergen Hill to the termination of the canal west of Newark, to the Little Falls of the Passaic River, making the whole distance from Hoboken to said Falls short of fifteen miles."

He proposed to construct the bridge on granite piers, from 200 to 400 feet apart. It was to be for passengers and teams, as well as a railway. Over this bridge he proposed to introduce pure water into the city of New York. He thought it would be better than water from the Bronx River.

† This was Castle Point.

‡ This was a building which Colonel Stevens had erected for his own children. It stood where the institute is now.

§ This stood on Castle Point, a little west of the present mansion.



COLONEL STEVENS' MANSION ON CASTLE POINT.

as to afford a variety of other amusements; hence, 'The Green' at Van Buskirk's,* on this account would be preferable, next to our hill. Should you put up one, it strikes me you ought to subscribe to every newspaper in the city, or else some crabbed editor might take it into his head to write you down."

In a letter to his mother, dated July, 1825, he says: "There is one Russian Mountain not far from where I live. * * No doubt it would succeed in Hoboken. The best place for one would be in front of Rob's house,† to run parallel with it towards 'The Green'. It would be very pleasant to sit on 'The Green' and see the cars descend, and I think Rob might let his house to great advantage, if it were connected with it. I would make it thirty-five or forty feet high, and about two hundred long."

When these suggestions had passed through the alembic of Colonel Stevens' mind, a different product was evolved—something that bore the stamp of originality—something that looked beyond a simple toboggan for the amusement of the people to practical utility. Hence, on the last day of the year 1828, he was prepared to issue the following notice:

ROUND IRON WAYS.

"An exhibition will take place respecting these ways on the green near the Mansion House of Mr. Stevens, Hoboken, to-morrow, the first day of January, 1829, of a nature entirely new. A carriage will be impelled thereon through the air instead of on the ground, and with a rapidity far exceeding any Land Carriage."

The exhibition did not come off on New Year's day, as promised. It is doubtful even that the notice was published. But on the 24th day of January the "Round Iron Ways" were put on exhibition. Literary and scientific people attended it to see the wonderful railway. Among them were Nathaniel H. Carter,‡ Editor of the *Statesman*, and Professor Renwick of Columbia College.

The latter thus described it:

* At that time Lucas Van Boskirk kept the "'76 House."

† Robert L. Stevens' house was on the north east corner of First and Hudson Streets.

‡ To Mr. Carter, Colonel Stevens wrote on the following day: "You remained so short a time on the ground last evening that I doubt whether you obtained a clear idea in what manner the motion was given to the carriage sufficient, after striking against the springs, to cause it to return back again to the place it started from. This is effected by the descent of a weight which at starting gives to the carriage such an impulse as is sufficient for effecting the purpose. Two men at a windlass will raise the weight by the time the carriage returns so as to keep up a constant motion. The velocity of the motion will depend on the

"AERIAL WAYS."

"We accidentally saw the other day a new specimen of the ingenuity of Colonel Stevens, which we know not how to designate by any other title than that which is at the head of this article. The 'Aerial Ways,' in which we took a ride, may become as popular here as the 'Montagnes Russes' in Europe. They differ from the latter essentially, which we note, because they have been confounded with them in an article in the *Evening Post* referring to the invention of Colonel Stevens. The species of amusement, called the 'Montagne Russe,' owes its origin to the actual mountains of ice which are annually erected on the margin of the Neva, near Petersburgh. The good citizens of that capital take great delight in descending from the summits of those mountains with incredible velocity, but, like the boys formerly on the Flatten-barrack Hill, they are under the necessity of much time and labor of hauling their sleds up again. The 'Montagne Russe' is supported like common railways on the pillars placed at three or four feet distance from each other. The 'Aerial Ways' of Colonel Stevens consist of two parallel iron rods, four hundred feet in length, running from a firm erection about eight or ten feet high to another perhaps forty feet in height. On these rods a carriage with four wheels runs, which is propelled from the starting place by means of a weight, not more than two or three hundred pounds, attached to the machinery. The car ascends the rods to the utmost elevation and will not only return again to the starting place, but progress with any given velocity *ad libitum*, at a rate from ten to one hundred miles an hour. It is altogether, therefore, an original invention. As an amusement, it will also be seen, that the rapidity of motion may be regulated or accelerated according to the timidity or the fearlessness of those who ride. How much further in the length the rods may be carried, without any intermediate support, we are not at present prepared even to conjecture. The present ways are erected in the green near the house of Colonel Stevens; but we understood they were to be removed to the public green near the ferry."

They were finished and ready for use in the spring of 1829.

Besides a Merry-go-round, a ten-pin alley, wax figures and a Camera Obscura, a Flying Machine, or as the owner called it, a "Whirligig" was set up on the northwest corner of "The Green." It was a source of great wonder to visitors and profit to the owner. It was made of two cross poles sixty feet in length, mortised horizontally through a piece of timber which stood vertically on a pivot under ground. Under each of the four ends of the cross poles was affixed a car or basket suitable for four persons. The charge was twenty-five cents each. The baskets swung just clear of the ground. Below the surface and hidden from view a team of mules

velocity which a heavy body will acquire in falling, say 32 feet—this weight, though, it raises to the height of nearly 40 feet; in falling 16 feet it acquires the velocity of 32 feet a second; in falling 16 feet more, its acquired velocity will be increased to 64 feet in a second; but a velocity of 64 feet in a second is equal to 3,840 feet in a minute, and 3,840 feet per minute is equal to 230,400, or 43.63 miles per hour. With such an astonishing velocity the mail could be carried from New York to Philadelphia in about two hours. But, inasmuch as the motion of the carriage neither begins nor ends with such velocity, so far will this estimate prove incorrect. We will then reduce the average velocity to 30 miles an hour, which would enable us to convey the mail between the two cities in less than three hours; however, by giving the weight a greater elevation, we can give a proportionable increase to the velocity of the carriage."



INCIPIENT FERRIS WHEEL IN ELYSIAN FIELDS.

was hitched to a cross-bar close to the upright. When the mules were urged forward the baskets swung around the sixty-foot diameter with sickening velocity. On a holiday the proprietor sometimes took in as much as $225. Mr. Barnum once complimented him, saying: "It's a great invention; you go so far and so fast, and yet are so near home when you are done."

If at any time these sources of amusement failed to draw crowds from the city, an Ox roast was in order under the management of such men as Nelse Brewer, Wallis Mason, and Tom Hyer. The Ferry Company presented the ox and it was roasted where the Otto Cottage was afterwards erected. On another occasion an Indian War Dance on "The Green" was announced. Such crowds poured over the ferry that the poor Red Skins took fright, fled to Bergen Woods, and hid in the swamp. Just north of the Race Course was Fox Hill, consecrated to love-making, gypsy parties and picnics. On little Fox Hill, adjoining, was a Deer Park, established by a western man.

In McCarty's time at the "Colonnade," an advertisement appeared that a lady and gentleman would ascend in a balloon at Elysian Fields. They did not appear, but two cats were on hand to take their place. This was more than the assembled multitudes, accustomed though they were to humbuggery, could stand. In their wrath they fell upon the balloon and tore it into pieces. Thomas and Tabitha were permitted to journey homeward by land, without attempting a flight through the empyrean.

In the days of Dyer who preceded Swift in the "Colonnade" an incipient "Ferris Wheel" was set up on the shore in the Elysian Fields. It consisted of two long poles balanced in the middle upon a cross-bar which rested upon two uprights. These poles were wide enough apart to admit between them at the ends a basket or car which swung on a pivot as the poles revolved, and thus kept its upright position. In these visitors took seats. Alongside was a permanent structure of the same height as the revolving poles, upon four poles with a cabin on the upper platform in which the aerial voyager might rest to take a more deliberate view of the river and the city beyond.

Instrumental concerts were given at the Pavilion every afternoon. "A Superb Brass Band" was in attendance on the lawn in front and performed a variety of

new and popular airs, overtures and marches, while the visitors promenaded the gravelled walks, or rested under the shade of the trees.*

In 1828 Colonel Stevens offered a $50 medal for the best oration to be delivered on the lawn in front of the hotel on the Fourth of July. A newspaper of the day stimulated the eloquence of the competitors as follows: "If local scenery has any effect in elevating the mind and inspiring generous sentiments, we know of no place better calculated to draw forth bursts of eloquence than the rural retreat at Hoboken. Commanding a view of one of the noblest rivers and bays in the world, covered with the foreign and inland commerce of the young Republic, with a proud city lifting its hundred spires on one hand, and the variegated charms of nature on the other. Nor is the Jersey shore looking downward to Staten Island and upward to the ruined fortresses on the banks of the Hudson wanting in revolutionary associations. If a citizen can ramble on a bright afternoon along the banks of the 'noble North,' through the shades of Hoboken, without feeling eloquent, poetical and patriotic, let him be assured that he is unfit to enter the list of competitors for the medal. The successful candidate may be certain of attracting a numerous audience, not to be wedged within the walls of a church, but seated upon the green turf of the great 'Temple of Nature.'" John P. Jackson, then a young lawyer of Newark, afterward Vice-President of the New Jersey Railroad and Transportation Company was awarded the prize,† but bad weather prevented the celebration and extinguished the oration.

Sunday was the great day of the week for Hoboken. It would have been difficult to count the multitudes which crossed the river to visit the place on that day. This fact made an unpleasant impression on the old-fashioned people who had been taught to "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." A writer in describing

* Von Raumer in his *America and the American People* said: "Hoboken on the other side of the Hudson, is likewise situated on Heights, which toward the interior spread out into plains; while on the river side the descent is abrupt, and a beautiful walk leads down to the water's edge. When we visited Hoboken many persons had gone over to witness the herculean feats of the two Ellsler brothers. The show cost nothing, as the proprietors looked for a recompense to the increased number of passengers on the ferry boats."

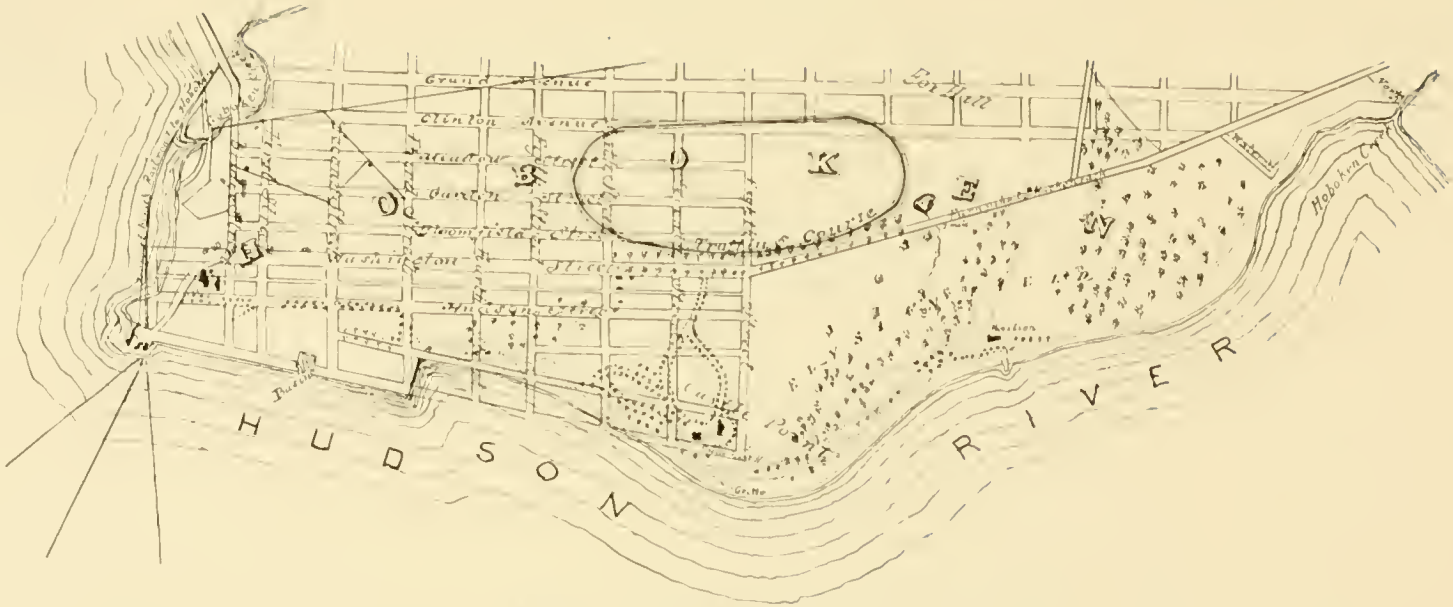
† June 30, 1828, John P. Jackson enclosed his competitive oration. It was awarded the prize, as appears by the following certificate:

"The piece enclosed and offered by John P. Jackson we consider the best of the productions submitted to us as orations for the 4th of July at Hoboken.

"John J. Morgan,

"E. A. Baucker,

"J. Aug. Smith."



SECTION OF DOUGLASS' MAP.—LOCALITIES IN HOBOKEN.

a summer trip to New York and the Canadas said: "On Sunday afternoon we stept into a small steamer, bound across the river, where lie, in all their natural and cultivated beauty, the Elysian Fields; meant to be, I suppose, a second edition of those heavens of the ancients; but judging from a description of the one, and a sight of the other, the modern seem neither greatly improved nor enlarged. There are, however, hill and dale, winding walks, grass-covered plains, and shaded seats in great profusion; and altogether they do much credit to the taste of the proprietor and the public. There appeared to be a considerable degree of levity amongst those who resorted to this spot of Sunday recreation, which was but little in accordance with our Scotch notions of Presbyterian propriety."

A lady writing of the Domestic Manners of the Americans said: "The price of entrance to this little Eden is the six cents you pay at the ferry. We went there on a bright Sunday afternoon, expressly to see the humours of the place. Many thousand persons were scattered through the grounds; of these we ascertained, by repeatedly counting, that nineteen-twentieths were men. The ladies were at church. Often as the subject has pressed upon my mind, I think I never so strongly felt the conviction that the Sabbath day, a holy day, the day on which alone the great majority of the Christian world can spend their hours as they please, is ill passed (if passed entirely) within brick walls, listening to an earth-born creature, charm he never so wisely.

It is true that at Hoboken, as everywhere else, there are *reposoires*, which, as you pass them, blast the sense for a moment, by reeking fumes of whiskey and tobacco, and it may be that these cannot be entered with a wife or daughter. The proprietor of the grounds, however, has contrived with great taste to render these abominations not unpleasing to the eye; there is one in particular, which has quite the air of a Grecian Temple, and did they drink wine instead of whiskey, it might be inscribed to Bacchus; but in this particular, as in many others, the ancient and modern Republics differ.

It is impossible not to feel, after passing one Sunday in the churches and chapels of New York and the next in the gardens of Hoboken, that the thousands of well-dressed men you see enjoying themselves at the latter, have made over the thousands of well-dressed women you saw exhibited at the former, into the hands of the priests, at least for the day. The American people arrogate to themselves

a character of superior morality and religion, but this division of their hours of leisure does not give me a favorable idea of either."

Now and then there was an attempt to do something grand and out of the ordinary by way of entertainment. The most unique thing of this kind was known as "The Buffalo Hunt." It was conceived and perfected *sub rosa* by that prince of advertisers, P. T. Barnum. In those days his conceptions were so novel and his advertisements so realistic that the people never questioned them. Had he turned a horse in the stall and then advertised an exhibition of a horse with his head where his tail ought to be, crowds would have flocked to see the prodigy.

In June, 1843, a herd of yearling Buffaloes was on exhibition in Boston. Barnum purchased and brought them to New Jersey, hired the Trotting Course at Hoboken, chartered the ferry boats for one day, and then issued the following advertisement:

GRAND BUFFALO HUNT. (Free of Charge.)

"At Hoboken, near the ferry, on Thursday, August 31st, at 3, 4 and 5 o'clock P. M., Mr. C. D. French, one of the most daring and experienced hunters of the West, has arrived thus far on his way to Europe with a herd of Buffaloes captured by himself near Santa Fé. He will exhibit the method of HUNTING THE WILD BUFFALOES and THROWING THE LASSO, at Hoboken, on Thursday; and in order to place this novel exhibition within the means of every man, woman and child, it will be FREE TO ALL, and will come off on a fine piece of ground within a few rods of Hoboken Ferry, capable of accommodating 100,000 persons.

THREE DISTINCT RACES

will take place at 3, 4 and 5 o'clock P. M. On each occasion a herd of 15 to 20 Buffaloes will be let loose. The City Brass Band is engaged. Extra ferry boats will be provided. For particulars see bills. If the weather should be stormy, the sport will come off at the same hour the first fair day."

Barnum says he was careful not to state the age of the Buffaloes. This left the public to think of them as wild and fierce, fresh from their native plains. The day was warm and delightful, and no less than 24,000 people crossed the river to enjoy the cooling breeze and see the "Grand Buffalo Hunt." At a few minutes after three o'clock the herd was let loose. French, the hunter, dressed in appropriate Indian costume, mounted on a fleet gray horse, uttered an Indian whoop. But the bewildered calves did not know what was expected of them and did not run until



SIBYL'S CAVE.

the crowd gave a great shout expressive at once of derision and delight at the harmless humbug. This started them on a weak gallop. Immediately French gave pursuit. After playing with them about two-thirds around the course, he threw his lasso over the head of the largest calf. The crowd roared with laughter. When within three-eights of a mile from the starting point the herd broke through the inside fence among the multitude. Then it became the people's turn to run, and the rush was tremendous. Flight in every direction was in order and the devil take the hindmost. Pic-nics spread out in grassy angles, which promised inviolate privacy from intrusion, were invaded and abandoned. The trees became places of refuge, and every hole and corner which promised security was tenanted. Meanwhile the gorgeously arrayed hunter held on to the captured calf, until in passing a marshy place the horse sank knee deep in the morass, and its rider let go the lasso. The animal then made off and joined his kindred fugitives. French soon liberated himself and again, with lasso in hand, rode over the hill and out of sight of the spectators. The escaped Buffalo remained scampering among the people for over half an hour. About five o'clock three of the herd came round near the starting place, when French again mounted to renew the pursuit in earnest, and requested the people "to give ample room and verge enough." At the first throw of the lasso he caught one of the calves by the fore leg, but in running through a swamp the lasso slipped, the Buffalo got free and ran among the multitude. Then recommenced the scene of flight; "rout on rout, and confusion worse confounded," among men, women and children, of all ages, sexes and conditions, with a most indescribable variation of circumstances, panic and helter-skelter retreat. Mr. Frederick Stevens Masters, who got up a tree high among its branches, fell to the ground and died. A woman with a child in her arms, standing on the edge of a high bank, was frightened at one of the animals making a plunge toward her. She stepped backward to avoid danger and fell down the bank. She was severely hurt. Two young men fell overboard from one of the boats. They were rescued with severe injury to one.

Some of the buffaloes were captured as contraband in the streets and appropriated by the adventurous captors; others escaped to the woods. The whole affair was tame and spiritless, the animals affording about as much sport in the chase as a score of swill-fed cows from an uptown dairy. The people did not know who had provided the entertainment, but every one of the 24,000 who crossed the ferry to witness it

contributed to the purse of the enterprising Barnum, six and a quarter cents to get to Hoboken, and six and a quarter cents to get away.

Thus ends the story of this best and most attractive of the pleasure resorts of old New York.

In the peroration of his funeral sermon over Hamilton, the eloquent preacher, mistaking the *locus in quo* of the duel in which he received his death wound, pointed to the beautiful Island and said: "Ah! ye tragic shores of Hoboken! Place of inhuman cruelty!" But we being more certain of our premises, and knowing that nothing more tragic than Barnum's Buffalo Hunt, or more inhuman than Tom Hyer's barbecue is worthy of mention, may more truthfully say, Ah! ye enchanting shores of Hoboken! Place of poetic beauty: so often visited by the best, the fairest, the brightest of this great city; where the exhausted and the toil worn went to greet the health-laden breeze as it came up from the ocean; where nature and art combined to make man forget his mortality in rapturous delight; where the devices of the catch-penny rivaled the inventions of genius in drawing and entertaining visiting multitudes: The heart grows heavy when the eye sees that your Elysian Fields no longer hold out a refreshing welcome to the heavy laden, nor rest to the weary; that your grand old trees over which the Dryads presided, have, by the wand of some evil fairy, been turned to ugly brick and mortar; that your gravelled walks have vanished and your pebbly beach been profaned by huge warehouses, and by palaces which go down to the sea; that "The Green," where the "Flying Machine," propelled by the hidden mule, out-flew the sea-bird; where experimental railways on the earth and in the air delighted and instructed the visitor; where old New York on commodious seats, beneath umbrageous oaks recruited its wasted energy, drank the deceptive mead, or sipped its brandy and water, is gone to make room for palaces where "bier" from over the sea is ever on draught. But your beauties, hospitalities and entertaining devices will never be quite forgotten. History will perpetuate their charms and laughter paint an aureola around their memory.

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